Sandwell
CHRONICLE

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MAJORITY OF BAKERY DRIVERS VOTE FOR STRIKE ACTION OVER PAY

The Kingsmill bakery, in West Bromwich

DRIVERS at the Kingsmill bakery in West Bromwich have voted overwhelmingly for strike action over their pay dispute, union leaders have revealed.

There are fears a stoppage could lead to a "bread drought" in the run-up to Christmas. The drivers deliver 1.5 million loaves each week to Aldi, Asda, Co-op, Morrisons, Sainsbury's and Tesco and the Midlands and North West would bear the brunt of any bread shortage.

Bosses at Kingsmill owners United Bakeries have said they are "disappointed" that 80 per cent had voted for strike action, adding that their offer to the drivers is in line with the pay deal accepted by other drivers nationwide.

They also say they have "robust plans in place" to maintain bread deliveries in the event of a strike. About 130 drivers, maintenance and security staff, all members of Unite, were balloted for strike action in a dispute over what the union calls 'a paltry pay offer'. They are among 400 people who work at the site, Allied's biggest UK bakery.

Although workers have backed action, no date for a strike has yet been set as the union waits for a new date for talks with management. Unite lead officer for the food sector Joe Clarke said: "Our drivers, maintenance staff and security personnel at the Kingsmill bakery in West Bromwich voted by 82 per cent for strike action which is an overwhelming mandate for Unite's stance.

"Following the result, we have had initial discussions with the company about further talks. We are waiting to hear back from the company on possible dates for new talks. There are differences between us over market pay rates and the cost of living which need to be resolved."

A spokeswoman for Allied Bakeries said: "We're disappointed that our delivery drivers at Allied Bakeries West Bromwich site have voted in favour of taking industrial action. Over the past 10 years the pay settlements agreed at our West Bromwich site have averaged 2.4 per cent. This amount is over the CPI rate of inflation for the same period and consistent with our long-term commitment to paying a fair wages."

Town centre route to be shut during gas mains works

MISERY ON WAY FOR MOTORISTS

DRIVERS are facing long diversions near West Bromwich town centre as it was announced a major road is to be closed for more than two weeks.

Work to remove gas mains will see part of the A4196 Black Lake shut – a key route towards the Albion Roundabout into the town centre. Drivers have been warned the road will close near its junction with New Swan Lane and Church Lane at the end of February. Ageing gas pipes will be ripped out of the ground to be replaced with plastic pipes.

By Richard Guttridge

The project could cause a headache for motorists in an area where traffic regularly builds up towards the Albion Roundabout.

Details of the scheme have now emerged, with gas firm Cadent keen to give drivers plenty of notice before the closure comes into force.

The section is due to be shut from February 28 until March 16 at the junction of Bilhay Lane.

Only a small section of the A road will be closed, but it will force drivers heading towards the Black Country New Road and the Expressway to take diversions.

Cadent said: "Cadent is carrying out essential gas maintenance in the road to replace old gas mains with more durable plastic pipes.

"This is to ensure we continue to provide safe and reliable gas supplies to local businesses and residents."

The firm has embarked on a major gas mains replacement programme over the last year, affecting major routes across the Black Country. It is hoped new plastic pipes being laid will last up to 80 years.

Meanwhile, traffic disruption has been taking its toll in Sandwell over the past week, after a water main burst, flooding a road in Tipton.

The necessary repairs are now causing problems after the incident on Sunday which saw water sweep quickly along Coneygree Road near industrial units. South Staffs Water engineers were on site since Monday.

Motorists face disruption as repairs take place to a water main which burst flooding a road in Tipton.Temporary traffic lights have been erected in the road near the A457 Sedgley Road East during the works.

Sandwell Council's highways team warned motorists faced disruption during peak hours.

Dave's Out of Africa after last race

Dave Heeley, seen during the last great run event for 2017

RUNNING machine Blind Dave Heeley has completed the final leg of a gruelling programme of runs he has set himself for 2017, after completing his 25th great run event in Ethiopia.

The fundraiser from West Bromwich finished the Great Ethiopian Run in Addis Ababa on Sunday, the culmination of 12 months on running tracks around Britain and Ireland, and further afield.

Dave flew out to the Ethiopian capital for the 10km event last week and was given a warm welcome by the nation's legions of long-distance running fans, so much so, he described the run itself as 'a carnival'.

He even managed to meet one of his heroes, the legendary runner Haile Gebrselassie.

The unstoppable runner has raised around £30,000 for the Albion Foundation this year, through his exploits.

● Unforgettable – Page 14

BUSINESS

West Brom building society back in black

THE 168-year-old West Bromwich Building Society – the seventh biggest in the UK – returned to pre-tax profit in its latest half year.

It made £4.2 million for the six months to the end of September compared to a £23.7m loss in the same period a year before when the society was hit by a one-off £27.5m charge for reimbursement of interest charges on certain buy-to-let mortgages.

The West Brom advanced £478m of new mortgage lending in the half year – £37m more than a year ago.

The building society increased support for first-time buyers, who represented 28 per cent of all new lending during the period from 20 per cent a year before.

CEREMONY

Fostering agency receives award

A FOSTERING agency was honoured at an awards night. Wholistic Fostering was recognised at the great West Midlands Care Awards 2017.

Based in Brook Street Business Centre, Tipton, the firm received the award for its work to provide safe, loving homes for children and young people who need support. Mike Dennis, operations manager, said: "We're so very proud and feel honoured to receive this prestigious award.

ENTERTAINMENT

Festive tickets to valley running out

MORE than 4,000 tickets have been sold for this year's Sandwell Valley Christmas event.

Families have been urged to act quickly if they want to book a place at Christmas at the Valley which runs every day from December 2. Christmas Eve has sold out.

Tickets at www.sandwell.gov.uk/christmasatthevalley.

INSIDE

NO PREGNANT PAUSE AT GYM

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Astle's widow in fresh bid for answers

THE widow of West Bromwich Albion legend Jeff Astle has insisted no stone should be left unturned after it was announced a long-awaited study into links between heading a football and brain damage will start in January.

Laraine Astle welcomed the announcement that the study was set to begin, but stressed the need for 'in-depth' research to put to bed questions over her husband's death.

The Astle family have been battling for years for recognition from the football authorities that the death of the former Baggies hero was caused by him heading the ball.

The study will be led by Dr Willie Stewart, the expert who in 2014 identified Jeff's death was caused by chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE), a condition traditionally associated with boxers.

Laraine said she was hopeful the results of the investigation would make football bosses take notice. But she lamented 15 years of missed chances to take action over the health of footballers.

A coroner ruled in 2002 that repeatedly heading heavy leather footballs had contributed to trauma to Jeff's brain.

The legend, who died aged 59, scored 174 goals for Albion, including the famous winner in the FA Cup final in 1968. Laraine said: "At one point I thought I might die waiting for it to happen. I just want it to be a real intensive study leaving no stone unturned."

Laraine said she would expect action if the study highlights dangers to players, adding: "The inquest was 15 years ago. If it had been done then it would have been sorted now."

The potential link between heading footballs and brain injuries has been thrust back into the spotlight recently, with former England and Newcastle striker Alan Shearer taking part in a documentary exploring the issue.

Former Wolves forward Kevin Doyle also revealed he had retired because heading the ball had caused two concussions. Ex-Walsall manager and Villa defender Chris Nicholl also said heading footballs had left him with brain damage.

Fatal crash driver, 30, 'sped into path of bus'

Collision – Deepak Riat, aged 30

The wrecked BMW highlights the devastating impact of the horrific collision which cost Mr Riat his life

Report by Alex Ross

A MAN died after he 'lost control' of his BMW due to 'excessive speed' and collided with a double-decker bus, an inquest heard.

Deepak Riat, aged 30, had crashed with the oncoming bus on Hamstead Road, near the junction with Amberley Green, in Great Barr, just before 9pm on September 23.

He was taken to Queen Elizabeth Hospital but sadly pronounced dead the following day.

The hearing was told how Mr Riat had overtaken a car further down the road, clipping a kerb before the bus driver saw him 'sliding from side to side' as he came into his path.

Pc Alexander Rippin, from West Midlands Police Collision Investigation Unit, said: "It would appear Mr Riat was driving at high speeds in a residential area. He hit the kerb on the approach to a roundabout and lost control of the vehicle sending him into the path of the oncoming bus.

"The speed of the car cannot be calculated but collectively people are saying it was travelling far in excess of the speed limit."

Direction

He continued: "In witness statements a resident said she heard a really loud noise and saw a white BMW travelling from the direction of Newton Road and it flew past over speeds of 80 mph and then she heard an almighty bang. It appears to be a high speed collision because of the amount of damage obtained to the bus.

"The bus driver said he had three passengers on board and saw the car sliding from side to side as it approached him and was going very fast.

"He tried to steer to the right to avoid hitting him."

Speaking at Black Country Coroners Court on Tuesday, Mr Riat's sister, Sandeep, paid an emotional tribute to the martial arts company director.

She said: "He is completely irreplaceable.

"He absolutely conquered life and we are proud of the man he was and the heart he had. Growing up he was a star and passionate in life in all aspects.

"He had a First-Class Honours degree from Birmingham University and we are now planning on setting up a charity in his name."

The cause of death given was acute heart failure due to massive injuries following the crash.

The driver in the passenger seat, Daniel Warwick, obtained significant injuries to his shoulder, knee and ankle.

Senior Coroner Zafar Siddique gave a conclusion of a Road Traffic Collision, stating: "There has been debate in what speed Mr Riat was travelling but it appears it was at an excessive speed."

Zero bans for Baggies fans in the past year

ALBION fans received zero football banning orders in the last year – while 32 were made against Wolves supporters, the highest amount in England and Wales.

Figures released by the Home Office have revealed the number of orders issued between August 2016 and July this year.

Over the previous 12 months there had been seven orders made against Albion supporters and 21 against Wolves fans.

Data was also published revealing the total number of banning orders that remain in force as of August 7.

There are 16 against Baggies supporters compare to 75 in force against Wolves fans, 41 against Blues fans, 31 against Villa fans and 30 against Walsall fans.

In terms of new orders made in the last year, a total of 18 were issued against Birmingham City fans, which is up from 13 the year before; 11 against Aston Villa fans, up from six; and three for Walsall fans, compared to four a year earlier.

Football banning orders are civil orders which aim to stop known hooligans causing trouble at and around football matches.

Woman's leg is broken in crash

A WOMAN was hit by a car in the Black Country, suffering a broken leg.

The victim was taken to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham after being hit at the junction of Bunns Lane and Birmingham New Road, near Tividale, close to the busy Burnt Tree junction.

The Midlands Air Ambulance landed near the scene but the injured woman was eventually taken to hospital by land ambulance.

The accident happened on Friday at around 1.40pm and led to traffic delays in the area.

West Midlands Ambulance spokesman Jamie Arrowsmith said: "We treated one patient for a leg fracture. She was fully concious and was taken to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital."

MP Pat backs city coffee business

WOLVERHAMPTON MP Pat McFadden has praised a new business producing its own coffee.

The city's Fairtrade Partnership is selling 'Wolverhampton Coffee' from its shop in the Methodist Centre in School Street.

Mr McFadden said: "I am thrilled."

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Outbreak of measles in city sparks vaccine call

A MEASLES outbreak has taken place in Birmingham, with health bosses urging people to ensure they are vaccinated.

Public Health England has confirmed there has been of cases of measles in the city and it is encouraging people to check whether they have had two doses of the MMR vaccine.

Dr Bharat Sibal, a PHE consultant, said: "Measles is a highly infectious viral illness.

"If you think you could have measles, it is really important to stay away from areas where you could come into contact with lots of other people – especially vulnerable patients in hospitals, care homes or other settings."

Symptoms include high fever, sore, red, watery eyes, coughing, aching and generally feeling unwell.

Dr Sibal continued: "Those affected in Birmingham are all recovering but it's important to be aware that measles can be a very serious illness and lead to severe complications.

"I would urge anyone with symptoms to stay at home and phone their GP or NHS 111 for advice, rather than visiting the surgery or A&E.

"The free MMR vaccine is a safe and effective way of protecting against measles, as well as mumps and rubella.

For more information, visit www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles/symptoms

Head wound no laugh for comic

BEING a comedian proved a dangerous profession for Staffordshire-born Chris Stokes who is currently on tour with Milton Jones.

Chris, from Great Wyrley, found himself in hospital with a head wound after cutting his head on a lighting rig at Ipswich Regent theatre.

He said: "Surprisingly it didn't really hurt. I knew I'd hit my head but didn't know how badly until the horrified staff watched the blood pour out of the wound. I got nine staples in my head. I still made it back to the theatre by the end of the show though."

Supporting Milton Jones, Chris appeared at both Wolverhampton Civic Hall and Dudley Town Hall recently. The tour comes to Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre on February 11.

Funny times ahead

THERE'S a funny week ahead with comic Jerry Sadowitz at Wolverhampton's Slade Rooms tomorrow (Friday) and Ed Byrne at the city's Wulfrun Hall on Saturday. Russell Brand is at the Symphony Hall on Tuesday.

City taking on most refugees in region

MORE Syrian refugees are being resettled in Wolverhampton than in five neighbouring boroughs combined, including Sandwell, figures have revealed.

The city council earlier this year agreed to take in 20 refugees a year for the next five years as part of a Government-led resettlement programme.

So far the council has accommodated 19 refugees. The numbers of refugees being rehomed is different in neighbouring authorities.

Walsall and Dudley are to take in a total of 20 refugees.

Dudley has already accommodated six families.

Stafford has taken in six families, 26 people, and Cannock has rehomed two.

Both have no immediate plans for anymore.

Fleeing

Sandwell Council has not participated in the programme called the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement scheme which was launched in a bid to help those families fleeing civil war in Syria.

Nationally, 20,000 refugees will be bought in, with the programme designed to assist local authorities take in their agreed quotas.

Councils receive £8,520 per refugee accepted, plus £4,500 to provide education for every child aged five to 18 years. Further funding is available to the council for each refugee every year.

A 'guide for location authorities' has an inventory of items, including mattresses, a hoover and washing machine, for rehomed families.

Those resettled have a five-year visa which enables them to work and claim benefits.

When the five years expires, the refugee can choose to return to Syria or apply for permanent settlement in the UK.

Nirmal Samrai is the head of housing at Cannock Chase Council.

She said: "Refugees are accommodated based on need and suitability.

"Because of this, it is too early to say if Cannock will be accommodating any more families but we will be working with the county council on this issue if and when required."

Police warn pub to help call time on violence

A TROUBLE-HIT pub has been warned by police to help call time on brawls and violence or face serious action.

A serious alleged attack in the toilets at The Knights Quest and a mass brawl in the street outside are among the ugly incidents West Midlands Police say are plaguing the pub in Blackheath.

The Knights Quest

Pub bosses are now due to appear before a Sandwell Council licensing panel following a customer's claim he was set upon by a gang of up to 15 people in the toilets last month.

The High Street pub had been due to appeal tightened security measures enforced by the police but are now thought to have backed down.

It means the pub will have to close an hour earlier on Fridays and Saturdays and have two door staff wearing body cameras on duty from 9.30pm on weekends. Senior officers said they will continue to monitor events at the pub.

Officers were called to 35 incidents over two years, including 'mass disorder' involving up to 30 people which saw a man knocked unconscious when his head was stamped on during a brawl in the road outside the pub.

A report from West Midlands Police said: "They did not want the licensed hours reduced, they thought one not two door staff were required on a Friday and Saturday and thought the requirement that a personal licence holder be physically on the premises during all times the premises be open was too onerous." It continued: "Unfortunately, there was a further significant incident on October 7, 2017. There was also another incident on October 16, 2017."

Licensee Gerald Lloyd said: "Although we do not accept the detail of all the allegations levelled by the police, we have decided to effectively withdraw our appeal and to concentrate on working with the relevant authorities."

It's all fancy for Nancy to mark 100

Nancy Johnson, aged 100, with great granddaughter Olivia Johnson, eight months and grandson Paul

IT'S not everyday you can celebrate a 100th birthday in style – but the family of Nancy Johnson made sure that's exactly what happened with a glamorous evening out in her honour.

Nancy, from Hill Top Lodge, in West Bromwich, was treated to a meal at her favourite restaurant - Jefferson's, on the Hagley Road, as family and friends gathered.

Originally from Langley, in Oldbury, Nancy had worked at the famous Bluebird Toffee company near Birmingham and Oldbury firm Albright and Wilson.

She has three sons Samuel, John, David and one daughter Mary along with seven grandchildren, three great grandchildren and four great great grandchildren. Her husband Samuel died in 1990.

Catherine Johnson, daughter-in-law, said: "We never thought she would live to this age but she is fantastic for it.

"She is a real character and loves her children. We loved the family gatherings at her house especially at Christmas time when she would do all the cooking.

In 2014 she moved into the care home Hill Top Lodge after living with Catherine and John for some time.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Bus stab suspect caught on film

POLICE have released an image of a man wanted over a stabbing following an altercation on a bus. A teenager was stabbed six times and detectives have named Travon Poleate as their chief suspect.

The CCTV image

Officers were called to Dyas Road on September 8 following reports the 17-year-old victim was chased off the number 28 bus before being attacked with a knife. The victim was taken to hospital but has since made a full recovery.

Poleate – an American national who has previously been living in Hockley and has links to Handsworth – is described as black, 6ft 2ins tall, slim with afro-style hair.

Anyone with information is asked to contact West Midlands Police on 101 quoting the crime reference 20BW/191892H/17.

Christmas twist to cider festival

A PUB'S Christmas lights and cider festival will be supporting a local charity.

The Jolly Crispin in Clarence Street, Upper Gornal, is staging the event on Friday from 7pm with the switching on of its festive display.

Black Country Brass will be performing festive music and faggots and grey paes, mulled wine and cider will also be on sale.

The event will be supporting Dudley's White House Cancer Support charity.

Fownes Brewing Company, based at the rear of the pub, is also holding a pop-up bar on Friday and Saturday with four winter ales on sale.

The pub also has a choir day on December 10. The Gentlemen Songsters will be entertaining crowds from 2pm to 4pm.

For more information search for The Jolly Crispin on Facebook.

Paddington's on way to West Bromwich

EVERYONE'S favourite marmalade-loving bear Paddington is on his way to West Bromwich this Christmas.

Children and adults can meet him on December 17. He'll be appearing at New Square at intervals between 11am to 4pm, when fans will have the chance to say hello and get a big bear hug as he poses for photos.

Paddington will be appearing as part of the West Bromwich Christmas Extravaganza organised in partnership with West Bromwich Town BID.

COUNTY NEWS

Search on for best bus drivers

THE search is on to recognise the region's best bus drivers. Arriva wants to say a huge thank you to the bus drivers who provide such a vital service to passengers in the Black Country and Staffordshire.

The annual Made A Difference (M.A.D) awards aim to celebrate the work done by Arriva staff and thank individuals for their hard work.

If nominated, your local bus driver could be invited to a glamorous gala dinner to find Arriva's Bus Driver of the Year . To nominate, visit www.arrivabus.co.uk/doty, with the first round of nominations closing on Friday December 15.

Big otter-tunity to join wildlife study

A WILDLIFE trust is looking for volunteer otter spotters to help survey the River Stour.

Hannah Lewis, from the Birmingham and the Black Country trust, recently discovered signs of otters at a housing development. It is the first time signs of otters have been spotted at the location. Now the Trust wants to survey the river to see where otter populations are thriving to get an idea of which parts of the Stour are in good health – and which are not.

Anyone who ishes to volunteer to become an otter spotter across various locations on the River Stour can call Hannah on 0121 523 0094.

Foreigner foray for blues star Jo

BLACK Country blues star Joanne Shaw Taylor is set to support rock icons Foreigner on their upcoming UK tour. She will also be joined by artist John Parr at Birmingham's Symphony Hall on May 15.

The artist is also set to headline the Saturday of Planet Rockstock in Trecco Bay on December 2.

The Wednesbury-born guitarist will appear alongside the likes of Monster Truck, Dan Reed Network, King King and Thunder.

Toolstation branch opens for business

TOOLSTATION has announced the opening of a new branch in the West Midlands.

The new Toolstation is at Unit 2, Ionic Business Park, Birmingham New Road, Dudley. It is open for business seven days a week, from 7am to 7pm Monday to Saturday and 9am to 4pm Sundays. Previously located in Great Bridge, all business and employees transferred to Dudley.

1. Tink often stops to say hello to Bob the goldfish

2. Teddy's confused between a dovecote and a dove cat

3. African pygmy hedgehog Flossy in her woolly nest

4. Bear loves to bite toes and chase around the garden

5. Tortoise Fred lives in the garden and just loves eating buttercups on the lawn

6. Bags of room in here – Benji finds this is a comfortable place to bed down

7. Together – four-year-old guinea pigs Billy and Tom share a very special bond

8. Reeves and Mortimer who were always up to mischief when they were kittens

9. Olaf the rabbit was found in a carrier bag in a tree. Here he is with best friend Anya

10. Milo, a Staffie cross, came from the Dogs Trust and loves doing agility tricks

YOUR TIME TO VOTE

WELL the time has come for you readers to have your say.

For weeks we have been bombarded by lovely pictures of your treasured pets – and we thank everyone for taking the time to send in all the wonderful entries.

We have already carried some of the entries in our weekly pets competition page throughout all our seven editions.

There was so much choice it was difficult for us to pick out the final 10 for the shortlist.

Variety

All of them so cute and obviously so loved. The pride shone through in the emails we received – some sending in more than one picture of their special pet.

The variety of pets has been huge – lots of cats and dogs, turtles, ponies, hamsters, tortoise etc. Noah could have filled his ark several times over!

But now it is decision time. On the right is the voting form with all the details our readers need to let us know which is their favourite.

We will carry the pictures again next week and the winner will be announced next month with the best-loved picture carried on the front of our Christmas editions. And the winner will also receive a £100 cash prize.

We are not just looking for the cutest pet – although some are very difficult to resist – but the best picture itself, one that you would pick out if you saw it in the paper.

So look closely at the 10 shortlisted pictures and choose the one you think deserves the prize.

We will be counting up the votes after the second week of running the shortlist. Entries must be in by Monday, December 12.

This is your chance to have your say!

ANIMAL CRACKERS

To vote for your favourite photograph either email the picture number to sue.attwater@expressandstar.co.uk or tick one box on this form and send it to Sue Attwater, The Chronicle, 51-53 Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

PICTURE 1 ☐ PICTURE 6 ☐
PICTURE 2 ☐ PICTURE 7 ☐
PICTURE 3 ☐ PICTURE 8 ☐
PICTURE 4 ☐ PICTURE 9 ☐
PICTURE 5 ☐ PICTURE 10 ☐

First boss appointed new trust in borough

A FORMER council director has been appointed to lead a new trust aimed at turning around children's services in Sandwell.

Frances Craven will take on the role of chief executive of the Sandwell Children's Trust. She has experience of children's services from her previous role at Leicester City Council, where she was strategic director for children's services.

Ms Craven will work alongside former Home Secretary Jacqui Smith, who has been appointed as chairman of the board at the trust, which is tasked with driving up standards at the department which faced major criticism following successive inadequate ratings from Ofsted.

In Leicester children's services went from being rated inadequate to requires improvement under her watch, while leadership and management was rated good.

The trust will be run independently of Sandwell Council after it was taken out of its hands by the Government last year. Ms Craven: "I am very pleased to be joining Sandwell Children's Trust and feel privileged to be the first chief executive to lead this new organisation.

"I am looking forward to working with staff and partners. This is an exciting opportunity to make a difference for the children, young people and families of Sandwell."

Ms Smith, who served as Home Secretary in Gordon Brown's Labour Government, said: "Frances has a proven track record of improving services for vulnerable children and families. I am confident that she will provide strong leadership."

Main burst turns street into river

A ROAD in Tipton was flooded, causing disruption for motorists after a water pipe burst. Water swept along Coneygree Road after the main burst.

Part of the pavement ruptured, sending water streaming into the road alongside Tipton Sports and Social Club. Utilities company South Staffs Water sent workers to the scene near Dudley Port and four-way roadworks were set up to direct traffic.

Bystanders first saw water flowing along the road at around 7am on Sunday and workers remained at the scene for most of the day. At its height water covered pavements and into car parks of buildings in the area.

Retired foundry worker Ray Webb, 74, who lives on Coneygree Road, said: "I've never seen anything quite that bad."

Hundreds object to new power plant plans

HUNDREDS of people have objected to plans to build a huge power plant that would overlook the M5.

A petition signed by 450 people has been handed to Sandwell Council bosses demanding the facility, which would convert 400,000 tons of waste into electricity a year, is blocked from going ahead. The major development would allow electricity to be produced to power 70,000 homes a year.

An application by Versus Oak Energy to create the 10,000sq m energy recovery facility at Giffards Recycling off Kelvin Way in West Bromwich has now been lodged.

Designs show a huge metallic factory towering over the M5. However, the proposals have sparked a backlash from residents in the area.

A public consultation event giving more details about the proposed scheme was attended by around 50 people – while the petition against the plans has now been submitted. The energy facility would process and convert waste into high-pressure steam.

The steam would then be de-pressurised to produce electricity. Existing buildings on the site would have to be bulldozed. A design statement submitted with the application said that the site would operate 24/7 but that waste deliveries from lorries would be restricted to between 7am and 7pm on weekdays and 7pm and 1pm on Saturdays.

Appeal aims to boost play area

BIRMINGHAM Children's Hospital Charity is launching a new appeal – Out to Play – which will provide the 90,000 children and young people and their siblings who visit each year, with an outdoor play area.

One in eight children in the West Midlands are treated at the children's hospital every year and more than 100 children had to spend Christmas Day in the hospital last year as they were too poorly to go home.

The current outdoor play area is desperately in need of renovation.

The appeal is calling for community groups, local businesses, schools, families and even celebrities to support the appeal to raise £230,000 to update facilities.To play a part visit bch.org.uk/OutToPlay for fundraising ideas.

Bookworm boost

A NEW reading group for Sandwell bookworms will be taking place on the last Friday of each month.

Readers will gather in Central Library, West Bromwich, from 2.30pm to 4pm.

Grieving family back road safety effort

Ryan Coney, who died aged 22

THE family of a young footballer killed by a speeding driver has backed a road safety charity's campaign urging motorists to slow down. Ryan Coney's grieving relatives have been supporting Brake's Road Safety Week following the death of the popular 22-year-old earlier this year.

The factory worker was fatally wounded when a Suzuki Swift he was a front seat passenger in crashed. The driver, Morgan Chaplin, aged 18, had cocaine and cannabis in his system and was travelling at more than twice the speed limit when he lost control of the car and hit a garden wall in Pelsall. The court heard Chaplin had never before driven on a public road.

Now Ryan's family, which is receiving ongoing support from expert serious injury lawyers at Irwin Mitchell, is backing road safety charity Brake's campaign. His mother, Vivienne, 51, said: "Our family has been torn apart by Ryan's unnecessary death."

Wolverhampton Crown Court was told that Chaplin was travelling at 63mph in a 30mph zone in Lichfield Road, Pelsall, when he lost control of the Suzuki, clipped a kerb and ploughed into a wall. Ryan, the youngest of four children alongside Lee, 29, Jemma, 28 and Dean, 27, died shortly after the collision which happened at about 7pm on February 11. Two other passengers in the car survived the collision.

Chaplin, of Bloxwich, was sentenced to three years and four months in custody, after he pleaded guilty to causing death by dangerous driving. He will serve half of that sentence before being released on licence. Upon release he must also serve a five-year driving ban.

Payback teams clear 15 tons to improve areas

SUPERVISED offenders doing unpaid Community Payback cleared nearly 15 tons of rubbish from Sandwell's neighbourhoods as part of the Safer 6 campaign.

Figures reveal offenders carried out a total of 817 hours during the six-week campaign, removing 14.96 tons.

Sandwell Council's estate maintenance team works with Staffordshire and West Midlands Community Rehabilitation Company to get offenders cleaning up sites.

In Oldbury offenders cleared dumped rubbish from a passageway/communal area on the Lion Farm estate and cut back an overgrown area at an old allotment site in Beeches Road.

Meanwhile, in Rowley Regis, overgrown bushes in Perry Park Road were cleared, and they tidied up an area by garages at Falcon Place as well as helping at a major community tidy-up at Mousesweet Brook Nature Reserve.

Councillors

Rubbish, fly-tipping, moss and weeds were cleared at the side and rear access paths in Roslyn Close, Smethwick to make them safer to use.

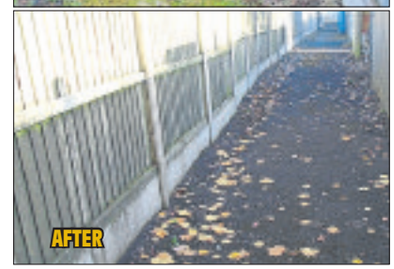
In Tipton, offenders cleared rubbish and overgrown areas at Upper Church Lane open space, and joined councillors, neighbourhood officers and police cleaning up Fred Perry Walkway.

Wednesbury saw overgrown shrubs cleared up at the pedestrian underpass and cycle route in Dudley Street, to make it safer for people to use.

And finally, in West Bromwich offenders cleared dumped rubbish and overgrown areas at the Harwood Street to Mason Street walkway and Wood Lane garage site, and cleared dumped rubbish and overgrown areas at Wallface, Hill Top, on the West Bromwich/Wednesbury border.

Public health chief, Councillor Elaine Costigan, said: "Through the Community Payback scheme, residents can see offenders serving their sentences, carrying out clean-up projects that benefit our towns and neighbourhoods."

The successful clear-up project at Perry Park Road



Rosyn Close path transformed, after the work

Poet Ben is back with a tale to tell

BRUMMIE poet and musician Benjamin Zephaniah will hit the road once more in the spring and summer for his first solo UK tour in eight years.

The Peaky Blinders actor is heading out to coincide with the publication of his autobiography, The Life And Rhymes Of Benjamin Zephaniah, published by Simon and Schuster on May 3, 2018.

The tour includes a hometown gig at Birmingham's Town Hall on June 15. Tickets are already on sale from the venues.

Professor Zephaniah will reflect on a remarkable life that includes a close friendship with Nelson Mandela, a musical career that has included collaborations with Sinead O'Connor and The Wailers, and his political campaigning.

Zephaniah was included in The Times' list of Britain's top 50 post-War writers in 2008 and was born and raised in Handsworth. He moved to London at 22.

His tireless campaigning has seen him made an honorary patron of The Vegan Society. For tickets, priced up to £25, visit www.thsh.co.uk/event/the-life-rhymes-of-benjamin-zephaniah

NEWS IN BRIEF

Hope for jobs with new depot

MORE jobs are set to bring a 'welcome boost' to the area after wholesalers transformed its base.

Company BB foodservice has launched its West Bromwich base as one of its 15 flagship depots across the UK. The site currently employs about 100 people but a wave of jobs are set to be created to cope with the company's 'ambitious growth targets'.

Site general manager Jon Griffin said: "We supply just short of 1,400 businesses within a 25-mile radius, making around 360 deliveries every single week, and we expect those figures to increase as we grow the number of businesses we supply."

Appeal for more to foster children

RESIDENTS in Sandwell are being asked to consider fostering by a leading charity. The call has been by Five Rivers Child Care.

It comes as a stark report has highlighted a shortfall of foster carers, and a rising number of children.

There is a shortage of 770 foster families across the West Midlands.

Manager Johan Strydom said: "We are really keen to hear from people who are nurturing, compassionate and enjoy caring." For details visit www.five-rivers.org/fostering or call 03452660272.

Call for mothers to have their say

HEALTH chiefs in Sandwell have urged mothers to get in touch to help shape maternity services. Sandwell and West Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Group is setting up a Maternity Voices Partnership, to offer mums and families the chance to discuss issues with healthcare professionals.

CCG bosses has invited mums to a first meeting on December 4 from 10am to 12.30pm at Brasshouse Lane, Smethwick, B66 1BA. For more details email SWBCCG.engagement@nhs.net or ring 0121 612 1447.

Backing for block of flats and shop bid

A PLAN to build a three-storey block featuring a shop and flats in a town has been backed by planning experts.

An application has been lodged to build the block on vacant land on St Paul's Road, Smethwick, next to Warley Supermarkets.

The plans, submitted by Mr S Josan of All Seasons DIY, have been recommended for approval by Sandwell planning officers, with the final say-so taking place last night, Wednesday.

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IN MY VIEW
with Mark Andrews

No way is student chav party 'classist'

WHEN I read that a group of students at Birmingham University were organising a chav-themed Christmas party, my initial thought was "where can I get a ticket?"

Getting blinged up, putting on a bit of fake sportswear and expressing dubious social attitudes, sounds a right lark.

Not everyone is amused, though, it seems. English student Gina Murfin lodged a formal complaint, saying the event was "so blatantly classist and distasteful it's difficult to know even know where to begin."

She also accused her fellow students of "making fun of a demonised and marginalised area of society." Not one for overdoing the hyperbole then?

A few things spring to mind. First of all, what has it got to do with class? Moreover, don't you need to possess a certain amount of money to truly embrace chav culture?

For example, all that gold jewellery doesn't come cheap, particularly the way the commodities markets have gone over the past decade. And quaffing all that strong lager, have they not seen alcohol duty lately? And that's before we get to the sugar tax. Former lottery winner Mickey Carrol styled himself King of Chavs, and he wasn't short of a bob or two.

Secondly, are chavs really a demonised and marginalised community? I would have thought the whole point of being a chav was that they are the ones doing the demonising and marginalising. I don't see blinged up louts as a vulnerable minority.

But more important than any of this, what is a "classist"? Look in the dictionary. There's no such word. And this girl's studying English.

❒❒❒

WE seem to have lost a lot of much-loved figures over the past year or two, but the death of Likely Lads star Rodney Bewes seems particularly sad.

In his later years he was a regular performer in this area, and he didn't bother with an agent or public relations officer. If he was in town he would telephone himself, and politely ask if we could give him a bit of publicity. He would then turn up in an old Ford Mondeo, with his scenery strapped to the roof rack or on a trailer.

He was saddened by his rift with co-star James Bolam, particularly the fact that Bolam distanced himself from The Likely Lads, seemingly believing it would harm his reputation as a serious actor.

Which is rather a shame. Because I can't help but think that 20, 30 or 40 years from now, The Likely Lads will be remembered much more fondly than New Tricks.

Soaring population: Time the Government got a grip

Jo Brand – reality telly at its most heart-tugging where stars are felines

Sajid Javid – claims that baby boomers are "living in a different world"

Biologist Sally Le Page – surprised at use of a divining rod to find a water main

No, baby boomers are not to blame

THE BEST OF PETER RHODES

SO it's all our fault. Somehow I guessed that the housing shortage would eventually be blamed on us of the privileged, pampered post-war generation. Communities Secretary Sajid Javid says we baby boomers are "living in a different world" when we dare to question the need for millions more houses to be built. Really? Or maybe we live in the sort of world where, when a country's population has soared from 50 million to 70 million in a single lifetime and is growing at 500,000 a year, we expect the Government to get a grip. Most of Britain's social, housing and transport problems are the direct result of our soaring population - and yet the Government has no population policy. The problem is not selfish pensioners. It is stupid politicians.

DON'T believe anyone who claims to understand the Budget on Budget Day. All the little nasties are hidden away in something called the Red Book and will probably come to light a few days later, maybe at about the time you are reading this. It's that oh, **** moment.

IN this age of impersonal, soulless banking, I loved the tale from a reader whose little garage business was struggling some years ago. He went to his bank manager for a small loan and explained his cash-flow problem. The manager opened his drawer and tossed his car keys to him with the words: "I've got a new car on order. Sell this one for me and take a cut for yourself." No loan, no interest, no paperwork. Just fond memories of a simpler and more humane age.

TELLY has ticked all the schmaltz boxes and flicked all the weepy switches with Jo Brand's Cats & Kittens (C5). This is reality telly at its most heart-tugging where the stars are felines, the plot is all about horrible injuries and miraculous recoveries, and the presenter is that plump lass everybody loves. The icing on this extremely sugary cake is that it's set in Britain's most sentimental city, Liverpool. Having put all the aah-factor ingredients together so well, where does C5 go next? I had a brilliant idea about fluffy little orphaned baby hamsters being taught to sing Christmas carols by Aled Jones. What could possibly go wrong?

SALLY Le Page, described as "an evolutionary biologist at the University of Oxford and an award-winning science communicator and YouTuber," was surprised to hear that two Severn Trent workers were using a divining rod as they tried to find a water main near her parents' home. She has duly tweeted against this "mediaeval" practice and is "astonished" to discover that other water companies use the same techniques. Frankly, I'm astonished that she's astonished. Isn't it well known that water companies and many private citizens use divining? Over the years it has been reported in many TV and newspaper features. How can anyone become an evolutionary biologist at Oxford without knowing such things?

I HAVE a friend who is a dowser. I can't produce any scientifically acceptable proof that it works, but he makes a reasonable living at it, which suggests he has a fair success rate. I once had a go with his divining kit and, as a fully paid-up sceptic, was surprised at the "pull" on the L-shaped rods swivelling in biro tubes. It could have been self-delusion or I may have stumbled upon an underground stream, who knows? But if I were a Severn-Trent worker with a van stuffed full of hi-tech leak-detection devices which do not always work perfectly (because that's how real life goes), I might be tempted to carry divining rods, just as back-up. Where's the harm and what's the problem?

ONE Guardian website reader put it admirably: "When did science become so shrill and intolerant? " I bet the answer is when science took over from religion. They both have their inquisitions.

OUT of a chilly, windy day and into the warmth of the hairdresser's where the clippers (number three all over, since you ask) are soon humming merrily against my skull. I ask the hairdresser whether any customer has ever fallen asleep. 'Happens all the time,' she says. 'It's very therapeutic.' Offhand, I can't think of any other therapy that costs a fiver for ten minutes.

IT was the hairdresser who pointed out that, no matter how dark and gloomy the days are, the winter solstice is only four weeks away. One of the strange things about our calendar is how early midsummer and midwinter fall. Spring? It's just beyond that black cloud . . .

AND I have no idea what happened to September's confident predictions that Britain could suffer six named storms before Christmas. We have seen only two and one of those was a damp squib. Either we are in for a truly horrendous December or this is yet further proof that trying to forecast the weather more than a week ahead is a mug's game.

TALKING POINT

No one is immune to falling on hard times

FOOD banks are used by scroungers and asylum seekers and are magnets for those just looking for free food – according, sadly, to outspoken and somewhat deluded opponents of the facility.

And while many of us may shake our heads at such insensitive and ill-conceived ideas it is probably fair to say we don't really know who does use food banks, but don't think it's people like us.

What wishful thinking to believe it won't happen to us, that we are unlikely to have to turn to food banks for help. In truth it could happen to anyone – and for a number of reasons.

A study from researchers at Oxford University and King's College London, looking at those who use the Trussell Trust network of food banks – which has given out 586,907 three-day emergency food supplies to people in crisis in first half of this year – found five out of six people were out of work and one in five had slept rough in recent months.

Ill health was common, while half of households using the food banks included someone with a disability and a third had mental health problems.

Eighty-seven per cent were born in the UK and four per cent had a degree – with the heavy debt of student loans hanging over their heads too. It's fair to say that the vast majority of those using food banks were on low incomes and more adversely affected by life changes.

However, any one of us could find ourselves out of work. Bad health is indiscriminate or we could suffer an injury and be left unable to work. What about those whose lives are turned upside down by divorce or family tragedy?

Latest figures are quite clear too that delays in making payments to people legitimately entitled to benefits under the controversial Universal Credit payments system have caused misery. Referrals to the trust in the first six months of the year were up by 13 per cent to 587,000 people, including 209,000 children.

One family from Hednesford recently donated £250 to the local food bank. Their reason? Both the mother, who was a nurse, and the father, a headteacher, had relied on such charity in the past.

No-one is immune to hard times and changing circumstances. Donate now to support those in need of a helping hand – just as you would hope the community would support you should the cruel finger of fate strike at any time.

● The Express & Star and Chronicle are running a Feed A Family This Christmas appeal in support of food banks and the homeless. Visit www.expressandstar.com/news/feed-a-family/

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Materialism no substitute for spirituality

I TEND to agree with the sentiments expressed by Tony Levy, writing about the spirit of Christmas and materialism (overpriced tat indeed!).

Christmas has been a commercial opportunity for many decades, but in recent years things have become frenetic. TV ads are silly and misleading (just look at that cringeable one about the toy left behind which just manages to get thrown onto the plane).

Of course, with the decline of Christianity people have no faith. They see no sense in being 'religious' because it means nothing to them. And while it is true that the non-religious, such as myself, can live to high moral standards, many people need examples set.

No amount of material things can make up for a life devoid of a spiritual aspect. The more people have, the more they want believing that inanimate objects bring happiness. No amount of mobile phones, computer games, downloads, trainers and other consumer goods can fill the space where some element of spirituality should reside.

MR C K MILLWARD
Tipton

Extension for Metro welcomed

AT last the Government has given the money for the extension of Midland Metro from Wednesbury to Brierley Hill.

Hopefully this project can now move forward at a rapid pace, so that Dudley gets the improved public transport service to Birmingham the borough deserves.

But why do public transport projects in the West Midlands take ages to happen? It is to the credit of Andy Street that movement is at last happening.

However Greater Manchester has managed to build a network across their conurbation in the time it has taken the West Midlands to build one line and a short extension of it across Birmingham city centre.

There are proposals for other schemes throughout the region. If the West Midlands Combined Authority is serious about getting people out of their cars then high quality mass transit has to be provided.

KEVIN CHAPMAN
West Midlands Campaign for Better Transport

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST
Sandwell Chronicle,
Chronicle Editorial,
51-53 Queen Street
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

EMAIL
sandwell.chronicle@expressandstar.co.uk

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

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Why is such a cruel TV show so popular?

I'M astonished that in a country of many animal lovers that a certain television programme is so popular.

'I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here' is amazingly popular.

But I ask the question why?

The programme has total disregard for the wellbeing of many varied creatures.

The animals are put in stressful situations.

Many are injured, drowned, killed and eaten alive, all simply to entertain the general public.

Are the RSPCA not aware of the cruelty?

And can they not act against it?

TV has become very sad. I have an idea for the next celebrity challenge.

Throw all the celebrities and Ant and Dec into a large, deep pit and then release a pride of hungry lions.

I do not usually watch this programme, but I would definitely watch that episode.

NEVILLE BROADBENT
Charlemont
West Bromwich

Rail boost is more vital

GREAT to hear that the Metro line two – Wednesbury to Merry Hill – has at last been given the go-ahead.

However, like line one – Birmingham to Wolverhampton – this is just replacing a former railway line that shouldn't have been closed in the first place.

Wouldn't it be better to reinstate the original rail routes?

These could be used for freight as well as passenger traffic.

It should be possible to use these lines for local tram services and standard rail services, I believe the London underground and overground services now operate joint services in some areas, though different platform heights do cause some problems.

Surely, on a new line, these problems could be overcome?

Over to you Andy Street.

ALAN J HUNT
West Bromwich

Bee good for allotments

WITH regard to your item about the proposed fruit orchard at Londonderry Lane allotments in Smethwick.

Do you think it would be an idea to have a couple of beehives?

This would ensure pollination, and I am sure a few thousand free range bees would be a deterrent to vandals!

Just a thought.

Wishing you all lots of luck with the project.

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Ancestors search boost on database

A DIGITAL database containing around 1.5 million burial and cremation records has been launched to help families trace their Birmingham ancestors.

The city council has launched a new searchable archive that provides access to records from the city's 12 cemeteries and crematoria, going back to 1836.

The records, spanning the 19th Century to the 21st Century, can be searched for free by first name, family name, location, year of burial/cremation, and other criteria.

Councillor Tristan Chatfield, cabinet member for community, safety and equalities, said: "This new database is a great resource that will help people to explore their family history, providing details of ancestors buried or cremated in Birmingham."

For more information about the service or to start a search, visit birminghamburialrecords.co.uk

22,000 home target is set

LAND for around 20,000 homes in the West Midlands will need to be found over the next two decades.

Tens of thousands of homes need to be built across the region by 2036 to keep up with the rising population, with housing chiefs tasked with finding space for them to be built.

The Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership revealed there was currently a gap of up to 22,000 homes where land needs to be identified for them. Another 300 hectares of land – more than three times the size of the i54 plant in Wolverhampton – needs to be found for employment as part of the Black Country Core Strategy.

Brave mum Kiera in special cot fundraiser

THE heartbroken mum of a stillborn baby has donated a special 'CuddleCot' to a Birmingham hospital which will help other grieving parents.

Kiera Pooler, of Brierley Hill, Dudley, raised enough cash to pay for the £1,600 device which she kindly handed over to the neonatal department, at City Hospital.

The CuddleCot is a portable device that circulates cold air around babies who are sadly stillborn or die before they have a chance to go home, to allow parents precious time to be with their baby before leaving the hospital.

Kiera was 27 weeks pregnant, when she found out her son, who she named Rogan-Lee, had died. Both Kiera and her partner Jake Hildred, aged 22, got to spend time with their baby after he was born at Russells Hall Hospital, in Dudley, because it had a CuddleCot.

From left, Nathalya Kennedy from Sands, Jake Hildred with baby Leila-Mai, Keira Pooler, donate the CuddleCot to Fran Wootton, ddvanced neonatal nurse practitioner, and Andrea Genner, sister in neonatal bereavement team

Extra

The 21-year-old, who has since had a healthy baby girl called Leila-Mai, now aged 15 months, explained: "Jake and I were able to have that extra time with Rogan-Lee after he was born, and it meant so much to us. My family also got to see him.

"However, at the time, there was only one device there and there were five other parents who had babies that were born sleeping that day.

"It meant that they didn't have that special time with their baby like we did. So I decided to fundraise for a CuddleCot."

Since the tragedy, which happened more than two years ago, Kiera has carried out various activities to raise the money and sold badges and tops with "Rogan-Lee's Charity" written on them.

She added: "Once I had raised enough money I found out that Russells Hall didn't need a CuddleCot, so Sands (Stillbirth and Neonatal Death charity) put a call out to find out which hospitals were in need of the cot. City Hospital came forward and so I was delighted to make the donation to them."

Fran Wootton, Advanced Neonatal Nurse Practitioner at City Hospital said: "We are extremely grateful for the kind and generous donation of this cuddle cot in memory of Rogan-Lee. We have complete admiration for the effort and dedication to raise the funds needed for the purchase of this cuddle cot.

"We cannot thank Rogan-Lee's parents enough for what they are doing for our unit and for other parents who will benefit massively from another cuddle cot, giving other parents the chance to have precious time with their baby should they sadly go through the same or a similar experience. Having this second cuddle cot will provide our parents with the possibility of borrowing a CuddleCot to take their baby home, should they wish to. Two of our neonatal consultants, Dr Sivakumar and Dr Venugopalan also came to meet the parents and thanked them for their very generous donation to our unit."

Erica Stewart, bereavement support and awareness specialist at Sands, said: "A CuddleCot is an option chosen by many parents. When a baby dies it's a huge shock and there is only a small window of time for bereaved parents to create memories."

Gifts appeal for victims in borough

A CAMPAIGN has been launched to support victims of abuse. People visiting libraries in Sandwell will be encouraged to donate gifts to help people staying in refuges in the borough.

The action was being taken in the run-up to International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women on November 25, also known as White Ribbon Day, and the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence, which run until December 10.

Councillor Syeda Khatun, Sandwell Council's deputy leader, said: "Refuges are asking for donations of 16 items that would be useful for women and children who arrive at a refuge and often come without anything."

All libraries will also receive a book called A Room of Their Own by photographer Susan Meiselas, commissioned by arts group Multistory, about women in a Black Country refuge. This book can be purchased from Multistory to help raise funds for a West Midlands women's refuge.

Libraries and community centres will also display leaflets from Black Country Women's Aid to give more information and support numbers for anyone who is a victim of domestic violence. Items that could be donated include toothbrushes and toothpaste for adults and children, shampoo and shower gel for adults and children.

Time for festive tea at Oak House

A SPECIAL Christmas themed afternoon tea will be hosted at a museum on Saturday.

The event at Oak House Museum in West Bromwich takes place from 2pm.

Tickets cost £12 per person or two for £20.

Call the museum on 0121 553 0759 to book.

Thief in fake illness is back behind bars

A SERIAL criminal who escaped from custody after faking illness is back behind bars.

Nicholas Gibson, who has 51 previous convictions involving 110 separate offences, was being held overnight at the Oldbury custody suite for a court appearance the following day after being caught shoplifting.

The 45-year-old told police he was feeling unwell and suffered from deep vein thrombosis, Wolverhampton Crown Court was told.

He was taken to Sandwell General Hospital on October 15 by two officers but was not handcuffed, revealed Mr Howard Searle, prosecuting.

He said: "His supposed health issues were taken seriously. There was no reason to think that he was likely to escape."

Waited

At hospital, Gibson was allowed to go alone into a cubicle to prepare for an intravenous drip while the two officers waited about six feet away.

But when a nurse went to check on the patient the cubicle was empty and the missing man was not found until caught stealing meat from an Iceland store four days later.

Defending Gibson, Mr Graeme Logan said: "He was not unwell. He saw an opportunity to leave both hospital and custody and took it."

Gibson from Chester Street, Whitmore Reans, Wolverhampton, who received a 12-week prison sentence from magistrates for the two shoplifting offences, also admitted escaping from custody and was given a four-month prison term.

Judge James Burbidge QC commented: "You are not the sort of person to cause the public panic by going on the run but you went on to commit another offence."

Old town scenes in picture

Retired teaching assistant Jan Herp with her calendar

A RETIRED teaching assistant has turned her hand to art with a calendar of drawings showcasing how Wednesbury once looked.

Jan Herp, aged 61, from Netherton, has pencilled 12 scenes showing the town in the 20th century and put them in a calendar.

Jan, a grandmother who grew up in Wednesbury, hopes care homes can buy her calendars to help residents with dementia.

She has already sold her calendars and some have been snapped up by people in countries including America, Germany and Spain. She has also exhibited her work at Wednesbury museum.

Anyone interested in a calendar can visit 'Jan H Art' on Facebook.

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Commercial feature

MARKET leading Stourbridge double glazing business Carera Windows has fitted more than half a million quality windows and doors over the past 28 years.

The company based in Junction Road, Audnam, started out 28 years ago to serve the Stourbridge area but as it has grown it has moved on to serve neighbouring areas including Halesowen, Kidderminster, Bromsgrove and Worcester.

The business moved to its present base 20 years ago. Carera offer a full range of windows and doors and also install a full range of conservatories, orangeries and living spaces.

Happy

The company prides itself on having a depth of knowledge in all aspects of the products it offers and industry regulations. The company is fully conversant with all current regulations within the industry. A key aim is to provide a level of customer service that is second to none.

More than 70 per cent of all Carera Windows' home sales come via personal recommendation from happy clients, which number many thousands. It takes pride in completing every project to the highest standard.

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The company's showroom at its base is open Monday to Friday. 9am to 5pm and Saturday, 10am to 4pm. It offers a wide range of products in various sizes and colours, manufactured using PVCu, aluminium, GRP and hardwood. Carera also installs entrance doors ,sliding patio doors , french double doors and porches

Carera Windows was started by owner and managing director Mark Crumpton in 1989, originally from home as a small enterprising double glazing company supplying the local area. Its housing association glazing contracts and commercial premises work now also takes the business across the country.

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Banks of soil built to stop traveller camps

SANDWELL Council has built up banks of earth around a field to stop illegal traveller camps.

Mounds of soil have been placed around the site located on Hambletts Road in West Bromwich.

A council spokesman said the work was carried out as part of routine maintenance.

Sandwell Council tweeted: "We've been out and made some improvements to the mound around the field at Hambletts Road in West Bromwich to keep unauthorised encampments away. Residents very pleased."

A digger was used in the process to construct the barriers.

Photographs showed a raised area of earth on the edge of the field where it joins to a path.

Banks of soil are built up at Hambletts Road, West Bromwich

Intrusion

It was welcomed by Greets Green and Lyng ward councillor John Edwards, who said there had been encampments there in the past.

He said: "The field is in really close proximity to residential areas. We have to take steps to stop any intrusion.

"Sandwell have taken these kind of measures on several sites in Greets Green and Lyng. They are an effective way of keeping public space in public use.

"Sandwell Council now has a site in Smethwick, where travellers if they want to live that lifestyle have the opportunity to have a proper site that is hard standing with a running water supply."

This is the latest initiative rolled out by the council in a bid to tackle illegal camps. The council was given greater powers to take swifter action against traveller camps after a transit site was built near to Black Patch Park.

This came following consent from council planning bosses. Travellers are allowed to stay for a fee at the site, which is built on asphalt and has toilet facilities. Meanwhile in January, Sandwell Council obtained tougher powers to move travellers off council-owned land within 24 hours.

In September, the council revealed the number of illegal travellers camps had fallen by half in 12 months.

There had been 26 illegal camps up to September, compared to 55 during the same period in 2016.

Sandwell Council has a dedicated service for residents to report illegal traveller camps. Email unauthorised_encampments@sandwell.gov.uk, call 0121 569 3862, contact local councillors or ring police on 101.

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Tairsters go ale over UK to notch up 20,000 pubs

A GROUP of pub-crawlers who have stopped off at an astonishing 20,000 boozers have now become film stars.

The exploits of the Black Country Ale Tairsters will be shown on the big screen after capturing the attention of a film-maker.

The group originally planned to visit 300 pubs on a map issued by Wolverhampton brewer Banks's but, like the beer they were drinking, they got a taste for it and just kept on going.

More than 30 years on, they have popped in at more than 20,000 watering holes across the UK.

Fascinated by their years of pub crawling, Ross Harrison contacted the group's co-founder Pete Hill about the possibility joining them on their travels for a short film. He spent two years following the group with his camera.

The Tairsters celebrate reaching 20,000 pubs at the Knot and Plough in Stafford

Screening

The 23-minute documentary catches up with the Tairsters as they tour pubs in a minibus as far north as the Shetland Islands, delving into their pub-crawling history, and reveals the views of the key players on how they have managed to keep going for so long. It had its first public screening at a pub in London last Tuesday and will now tour film festivals, as well as being available to watch for free online.

Film-maker Ross said: "This film came about when I read about a group of men from West Bromwich who had travelled nearly 300,000 miles visiting pubs across the country.

"I decided to contact Pete and see if he would let me film his story. When I first visited and saw his reams of records documenting decades of trips he has been on, as well as seeing what an energetic and friendly person he is to be around, I knew there was an interesting film to be made." Thanks to Pete's meticulous record-keeping of the group's travels, the film has been able to show photographs of scores of the pubs visited over the years, many of which have since closed.

During a trip to the Yorkshire Dales

Footage is included from over the years

Retired engineer Pete, aged 61, from West Bromwich, who has knocked back close to 50,000 pints since the tour of a lifetime began in 1984, said: "He had seen an article about us travelling 300,000 miles. We thought he would come once or twice but he was with us for two years. We are now good friends."

The film can be viewed for free at www.10shorts.com or on YouTube.

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Checklist of Dave's 24 races this year

Here is the list of 24 races Bind Dave has taken part in:

- Great Edinburgh Winter Run 5k on January 7.
- Great Ireland 5k and Great Ireland 10k, April 9.
- Great Edinburgh 5 Mile and Great Edinburgh 10 Mile on April 23
- Great Birmingham 10k on April 30.
- Great Bristol 10k on May 7.
- Great Stirling Marathon on May 21.
- Great Manchester Half Marathon and Great Manchester 10k on May 28.
- Great Newham 10k on July 2.
- Great North 10k on July 9.
- Great Aberdeen Half Marathon and Great Aberdeen 10k on August 27.
- Great North 5k on September 9.
- Great North Half Marathon on September 10.
- Great Bristol Half Marathon on September 17.
- Great East Half Marathon Ipswich on September 24.
- Great Scottish Half Marathon and Great Scottish 10k on October 1.
- Great Birmingham Marathon and Great Birmingham Half Marathon on October 15.
- Great South 5k, October 21.
- Great Great South 10 Mile on October 22.
- He will run Great Ethiopia 10k on Sunday.

Unforgettable finish in Ethiopia, says Dave

'IT was something that I'll never forget.' That was how Black Country fundraiser extraordinaire Blind Dave Heeley summed up his experience at the Great Ethiopian Run at an altitude of 8,000 feet.

The 10km run in Addis Ababa was Dave's 25th – and final – Great Run event of an amazing year. Dave flew out to the Ethiopian capital last week for his 60th birthday.

He completed the run alongside his guides Garry Wells and Tony Ellis on Sunday.

And during his trip Dave also met up with Ethiopian distance running legend Haile Gebrselassie, who won two Olympic gold medals over 10,000 metres and four World Championship titles.

Dave said the experience in Addis Ababa was unforgettable and led to an absolute whirlwind of emotions.

He said: "It was fantastic, absolutely brilliant – it was like a carnival. There were 44,000 people and they were all maniacs, it was brilliant.

Tunnel

"When you're running it's just wall-to-wall noise. It felt like you were running in a tunnel, at one point there was noise coming from every single direction.

"There were bands and people dancing in the streets – everything about it was just incredible.

"It was something that I'll never forget. It felt hard at times with the altitude but overall it was incredible – totally worth it." Dave has now completed 25 races this year in the Great Run series,

Report by Dave Cosgrove

which has seen him cover nearly 250 miles. He is raising money for the Albion Foundation and is set to bring in around £30,000 by the time he finishes.

The run in Addis Ababa was at an altitude of 8,000ft. Dave was joined by his guides Garry Wells and Tony Ellis. The trip was extra special as he celebrated his 60th birthday in Ethiopia, which he 'never imagined' doing.

Dave is an avid endurance athlete. He has previously completed Marathon des Sables – dubbed the toughest footrace on earth – in the Sahara desert, the Escape From Alcatraz Triathlon in the cold waters off San Francisco, and was the first blind runner to complete The 7s – seven marathons in seven days on seven continents.

Dave has raised more than £4,500 on his JustGiving page but after completing the latest race, he received a £25,000 donation from Wolverhampton-based Pertemps, after they sponsored him £1,000 for each race he took part in this year. To donate, visit www.justgiving.com/fundraising/blinddavegreatrunseries2017.

Dave Heeley reflects on an amazing year after completing his 25th great run in Ethiopia

Arrest after dog is thrown from balcony

A TEENAGER has been arrested on suspicion of animal cruelty after a dog was thrown to his death from a balcony of a flat in Oldbury.

The Staffordshire bull terrier was found at the foot of an 18-storey residential tower block by officers.

Signs put up at the scene in Wallace Close, Tividale, by the RSPCA, stated that the pet 'fell to its death from one of the balconies' at about 6pm, on November 8. Following a joint investigation, West Midlands Police said a 19-year-old man was continuing to be questioned on Monday about the incident. A resident at the council-owned tower block, who declined to be named, said a woman had found the dog lying outside Darley House tower and called the police.

She added that the animal had 'belonged to a nice old couple', and described what had happened as 'awful'.

A West Midlands Police spokeswoman said: "Officers have arrested a 19-year-old man on suspicion of animal cruelty after a dog was found thrown over a flat balcony.

"Upon arrival, officers found the deceased dog and began investigations into tracing the owner. Anyone with information about the incident can contact the RSPCA on 0300 123 8018 and leave a message for Inspector Steve Morrall."

Retail park unit is now up for grabs

A UNIT at a retail park has become available for let. Businesses are being encouraged to see if the space at the Astle Retail Park in West Bromwich could be right for them.

The unit at the town centre retail park is suitable for retail or office use, according to property firm LCP.

More information is available from LCP on 01384 660056.

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Pleased to help – oh yes we are!

Supporters – Jack and the Beanstalk panto stars Adam C Booth and Ian Adams visit the newspaper offices

A HOST of stars have come out in support of our Feed A Family This Christmas food banks appeal with readers rallying to help the cause.

Superstar boy band The Vamps were among the big names to back the appeal and urge readers and communities to donate items.

Singer James McVey, who was at the Merry Hill centre for the Christmas lights switch-on, said: "It is a great idea and a good cause."

And panto stars Ian Adams and Adam C Booth stopped off at the Express & Star and Chronicle offices in Wolverhampton before switching on the city's Christmas lights to offer their support to the campaign.

Ian, who plays Dame Trott and Adam who is Simple Simon in Jack and the Beanstalk at Wolverhampton's Grand Theatre, also appealed for more donations. Their fellow panto star Lisa Riley helped launch the appeal and support has also come from such names as Slade legend Dave Hill, auctioneer Will Farmer and Olympian Joe Clarke. Meanwhile a kind-hearted Cannock market trader has offered to collect food and other items.

Anne Franks sells a variety of goods for a different charity each week on her pop-up stall at Cannock Indoor Market and has offered to use the stall to collect for Feed a Family.

The stall is adjacent to the Market Cafe. Items can be donated every Friday and Saturday until the end of the campaign on December 16.

The campaign aims to help the homeless, those who need the support of food banks and women helped by The Haven refuge in Wolverhampton.

The non-perishable food will be handed to food banks and other charitable organisations across the Black Country and Staffordshire. Readers can donate festive food, and basics including canned goods, long-life milk, fruit juice, rice and non-food items, toiletries, baby supplies, new socks and small presents are also welcome.

THE DROP-OFF POINTS:

Express & Star Wolverhampton, 51-53 Queen Street, WV1 1ES; Express & Star Cannock/Walsall office, Queen Square, Cannock WS11 1EA; Oldbury office, Black Country House, Rounds Green Road, Oldbury, B69 2DG.

DONATIONS CAN ALSO BE DROPPED OFF AT:

Waitrose Wolverhampton, Penn Road, WV2 4NJ; The Midcounties Co-operative Food Store Codsall, 28-32 Wood Lane/Bakers Way, Codsall WV8 1DB. Donations dropped off at those will go to The Well.

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From left: Councillor Elaine Costigan, Councillor Syeda Khatun, Deputy Leader of Sandwell Council Elaine Williams, Emma Chetcuti, director of Multistory, and Deborah Slater, of Black Country Women's Aid

Libraries booked up to help victims of domestic violence

DONATIONS to help women's refuges are being sought by staff at Sandwell Libraries, where the work being done to wipe out violence against women is also being commemorated.

Special boxes have been placed at every library in Sandwell for people to drop off money to help victims of domestic violence. The move coincided with Saturday's International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, which is also known as White Ribbon Day, and marked the start of 16 days of activism against gender violence.

A list of items needed for refuges in the area has been published and will be displayed until the end of the appeal on December 10. The appeal is being run in partnership with West Bromwich-based art project Multistory.

Councillor Syeda Khatun, Sandwell Council's deputy leader, said: "I am pleased to see our libraries and Multistory working together on the project as we stand together against violence towards women."

All libraries have received a book called A Room of Their Own by photographer Susan Meiselas, commissioned by Multistory, about women in a Black Country refuge. The book can be bought to help raise funds.

There will also be a reading from A Room of Their Own by Wolverhampton-based writer, poet and storyteller Emma Purshouse at Central Library, West Bromwich, on Monday, between 3.30 – 4.30pm. Entry is free.

Details on events over the 16 days are on Multistory's events page multistory.org.uk/events.

The items on the wanted list for the refuges include toothbrushes and toothpaste for adults and children, shampoo and shower gel, towels, bed sheets and sanitary products.

For more information, contact Central Library, West Bromwich, 0121 569 4911.

More than 100 phone boxes face the chop

MORE than 100 telephone boxes are facing the axe across the Midlands. Figures show that in Sandwell alone, 14 are set to face the chop.

Meanwhile in Wolverhampton 11 are under threat, along with 18 in Dudley, and 17 each across South Staffordshire and Wyre Forest. And 60 could be removed in Shropshire.

Phone boxes under threat

Telephone boxes still handle 33,000 calls a day throughout the country, but BT are planning to remove around 20 000 of them in the next five years.

But the telecoms provider must inform the public and consult with the local authorities if they plan to shut them down. Councils then have 90 days to object, which is known as a 'local veto'. BT say the rise of mobile phones is making phone boxes redundant.

The Wolverhampton Liberal Democrats are calling on councils to use this veto to protect the phone boxes.

Afford

They say the booths are still used by children, the elderly, people who can't afford mobile phones, and in cases of emergency when phone batteries go flat.

Campaigner Paul Butters said: "I'm really seeing red over these plans to axe something vital from our streets. The Liberal Democrats are demanding that local councils write to BT to say that they will veto every single phone box closure in their area.

"Rather than removing these phone boxes BT should focus on making sure everyone can access a phone signal wherever they live.

"It is really important in case of emergencies because if it saves one person's life having a phone box, or helps someone in trouble then its really crucial we keep these phone boxes."

A BT spokesman said: "BT is committed to providing a public payphone service, but with usage declining by over 90 per cent in the last decade, we continue to review and remove payphones which are no longer used."

Out of the 40,000 phone booths still working nationwide, 7,000 are the traditional red phone boxes designed in 1935 to commemorate the silver jubilee of King George V. More than half of phone boxes lose money.

The cost of maintaining telephone boxes annually is about £6 million.

So far, more than 4,000 kiosks have been reused as mini-libraries and art galleries or to house defibrillation machines, information centres, shops and exhibitions.

Data leak sacking

A POLICE officer who disclosed personal information from the force's computer system has been sacked.

West Mercia Police officer Kate Buesing was convicted of illegally obtaining and disclosing personal data at Warwick Crown Court in August. She has now been dismissed from the force with immediate effect after a hearing conducted by Chief Constable Anthony Bangham. She had completed 14 years' service with the force.

Dealing with bumps on the road to fitness

GYM bunny Katy Poulsom is a firm believer that maintaining core strength throughout pregnancy will help her with the birth – and getting back into shape afterwards.

Katy, age 34, is a long time gym member at Sandwell Leisure Trust facility Smethwick Swimming Centre, on Thimblemill Road, and although now 32 weeks gone is still a regular visitor. She's been working closely with SLT fitness instructors Amy Stancliffe (herself 31 weeks pregnant) and Jonathan Melia.

She explains: "My bump feels like it's growing by the second, though I'm determined to keep fit and healthy throughout. My workouts aren't as intensive as they were before I got pregnant, but the rope workouts on the TRX weight suspension trainer are noticeably improving my core strength and improving my balance and flexibility too.

"I like using the TRX because it doesn't feel like you're putting too much strain on any one body part at once. Amy and Jon are a constant encouragement and we're already planning how I can start back once baby is born. "

If you are looking for some advice,why not ask a member of the SLT fitness team via https://www.slt-leisure.co.uk/about-us/meet-the-team/ or telephone 03000 120121.

Mums-to be Katy Poulsom, right, with fitness instructor and Amy Stancliffe at the gym

Record harvest for Brum cider maker

AFTER several years of investment, which have added 400,000 trees to the landscape, Aston Manor Cider has completed a record apple harvest.

The 2017 harvest was a landmark as all new orchards provided fruit for the first time. The Birmingham independent business anticipates yields from the recent planting scheme will continue to increase for a number of years.

As the largest independent cider maker in the UK, this signals the start of a 25-year commitment to farmers and growers across Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

Based on yield projections of around 20 tons of apple from every acre every year, the award-winning cider maker will pay more than £55 million to farmers and growers for this planting scheme alone.

Rod Clifford, head cider maker at Aston Manor Cider, said: "Despite the timings of this harvest being a little unusual, we were well prepared."

Man who terrorised neighbours behind bars

A MAN who terrorised neighbours and made threats to kill members of his family has been jailed.

By Jordan Harris

Luke Shirley, 23, of no fixed abode, was sentenced for making threats to kill his father and brother, harassing his former neighbours, carrying out an assault on one of them and burglary in relation to his former flat.

Shirley had been forced to leave his flat on Ridgeway Road, Tipton, in September after failing to pay his rent.

Prior to this, he had targeted two residents who live nearby in a campaign of hate which included name calling, physical intimidation and threats.

Wolverhampton Crown Court heard that the pair were targeted due to the fact they had helped police with an enquiry which Shirley had no link to.

He began abusing the pair in June but by September he had turned his attention towards members of his own family, threatening to kill both his brother and his father in phone calls.

After being kicked out of his home, Shirley began sleeping rough and returned to the property to steal electrical goods which he intended to sell to get money to feed himself.

The court was told that this year had seen Shirley hit a 'downward spiral' which has now ended with a 21-month prison sentence.

Prosecuting, Mr Howard Searle, said: "The problems started in June with the harassment of neighbours who had helped the police with information at one point.

"The defendant would follow the pair around and shout abuse at them.

"They became scared for their life and are now considering moving.

"The problems with his family came out later in the year and he made threats to kill both his brother and father over the phone.

"Then in September he broke into his former property and stole white electrical goods."

Prosecuting, Martin Liddiard, said: "His family have said to me that they will continue to support their son.

"He had never really had any problems until this year, when he has hit a downward spiral, buy they have faith he can turn it around.

"Substance misuse played a part in all of this."

Firms Santa round city to help charity

A FESTIVE networking event with a difference returns this Christmas with guests swapping cards and handshakes while completing a host of fun challenges.

The annual Santa Crawl takes place on Tuesday, December 5, in support of Birmingham homeless charity St Basils.

Teams of eight or more business people will make their merry way around the city's bars and the Frankfurt Market, carrying out a number of festive challenges.

This year it is hosted and organised by law firm Emms Gilmore Liberson, Blueprint Interiors, Cherrypick and The Marketing Engineer. The Santa Crawl begins at 5.30pm at Marmalade in the Birmingham Rep Theatre. There will be drink stops at The Botanist and The Victoria, before heading back to Marmalade for a hog roast and raffle, when prizes will be handed out to the winning teams.

For more information follow @BrumSantaCrawl or #BrumSantaCrawl on Twitter or visit eventbrite.co.uk/e/st-basils-charity-santa-crawl-tickets

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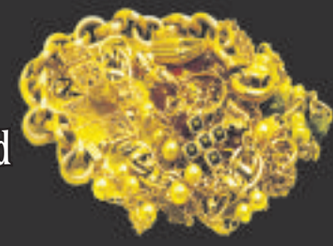

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Masters of trades are an inspiration

100 MASTERS

A WEALTH of talent in the form of award-winning authors, designers, green-fingered gardeners and inspiring athletes was put on display at a unique event.

The Black Country's best were celebrated at the 100 Masters one-day pop-up festival in the heart of Wolverhampton on Saturday.

Stars such as Sathnam Sanghera, Ellie Simmonds, Hugh Porter and The Fizzogs were among the list of those honoured at the event.

Taking place at Starworks Warehouse, in Frederick Street, the day offered visitors a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see the work of 100 different Black Country creators.

Kerry O'Coy, who was behind the Creative Black Country initiative, said: "The campaign started around 18 months ago and we started to ask for names of people brilliant in what they do. We had hundreds of nominations and then commissioned artists to represent them in a variety of different ways. It is incredibly diverse.

Masters of their craft – Donna Welling and Alfonso Urso, of Alfonso & Sons Ice Cream in Willenhall, at a special reception

"The masters range from those internationally recognised to those who are little-known, such as a shop owner from Wolverhampton."

Wolverhampton author Sathnam spoke about the BBC adaptation of his book The Boy With The Top Knot and growing up in the city, while music came courtesy of Conrad Gail's choir.

Hugh Porter, who was recognised as one of the nine sporting masters, said: "As a proud Black Country boy this is a fantastic honour."

Eighty-year-old printer John Neave displayed a selection of his original works and spoke about how technology has still not put him out of business.

One of the masters in gardening, 'Cactus' Stan Griffin, from West Bromwich, displayed some of his greatest home-grown cacti. The shortlisted Masters were chosen via a panel selection process and came from a dazzling breadth of backgrounds, ages and areas of the region. For details, please go to the website 100masters.co.uk

Eye-opener for Naomi after trip to Cambodia

PHYSIOTHERAPIST Naomi Rowden has many passions in her life: her job, her faith and her family, but she is also very passionate about helping those less fortunate then herself.

Whilst many of us use our holidays to go abroad and relax on a sun-kissed beach, Naomi decided to head to one of the poorest areas of Cambodia – to volunteer alongside 35 other medics in a hospital.

It was an eye-opening experience for Naomi, who found out about the opportunity through the charity HOPE, which runs the hospital in Cambodia, along with others in the country.

Crazy

The 22-year-old, who works for Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust, said: "We spent five days at Barray-Santuk Hospital in the KomPong Thom Province, and it was crazy.

"There is no appointment system – anyone could come to the hospital to be seen.

"There would be big queues every day of people in need of medical assistance.

"They would be triaged by nurses or student nurses, before being sent to doctors, pharmacists or if required they would be sent to us.

"I treated a number of patients for lower back pain, neck pain and strain injuries, but I also treated three stroke patients."

One of the stroke patients really struck a chord with Naomi.

"The gentleman had suffered a stroke three years ago, but he had received no physio. He used to be a fisherman, but with significantly reduced coordination on his right side he couldn't fish anymore.

"Unfortunately the window for change is quite short in stroke patients, however we were able to give him some exercises to help build up the strength in his left side."

Naomi describes her whole trip as a humbling journey and said that it made her realise how lucky this country is to have the NHS.

"Here, we have beds that rise to protect our backs and plenty of equipment to use with our patients," said Naomi.

"Out in Cambodia, the facilities are extremely basic – the beds don't rise and there is certainly no equipment – we were using bottles of water as weights.

"It truly was a fantastic experience and I have learned many things to bring back to my workplace.

"I have also discovered a new found confidence and have renewed appreciation of everything our wonderful NHS provides."

At SWBH Naomi works as a rotational physiotherapist which means that she changes her role every four months. Currently she is treating musculoskeletal outpatients.

She will start working on the wards again in January.

It's no surprise to learn who churchgoer Naomi's hero is: "Because my life and its outcome has been flip-turned upside down by the incredible love and amazing sacrifice of Jesus, I would have to say that he is my ultimate hero.

"And my mum, dad and brother are also heroes of mine, each in their own way."

NHS HEROES

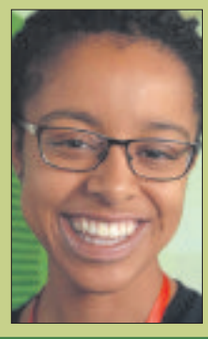
ONCE again we focus some of our time on the quiet heroes of the NHS, from a wide variety of backgrounds doing a wide variety of jobs.

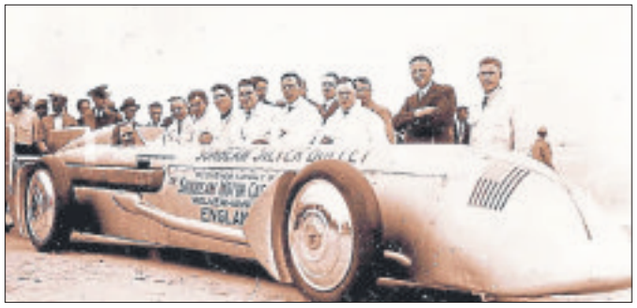
Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust is one of the Black Country's largest NHS organisations.

It employs 7,500 people, many of whom live locally.

Last year, the trust provides care from 150 locations.

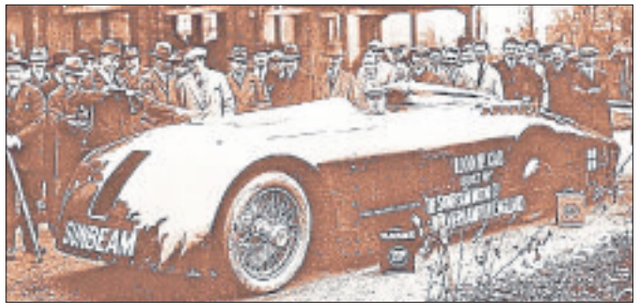
This week we highlight:
NAOMI ROWDEN
Physiotherapist





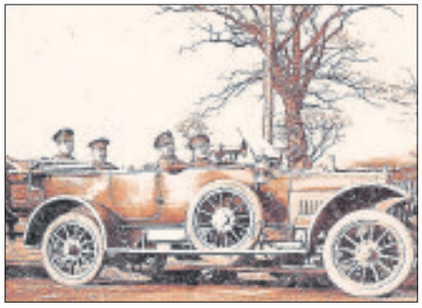
The Sunbeam Silver Bullet which made an unsuccessful land-speed bid in 1930

A Sunbeam 12-16hp parked up for a picnic, circa 1913



The world record-breaking 1000hp Sunbeam which reached 203 mph in 1927

Photo album sheds new light on Sunbeam story



16-hp Sunbeam staff car during the First World War

An aerial view of Sunbeam pre-World War One

A PHOTO album snapped up at auction has sent ripples of excitement through the small but devoted community of Sunbeam motor car enthusiasts.

The piece of transport history contains photographs and information about every item – from cars to wheel nuts – produced at the Wolverhampton-based Sunbeam factory between 1931-33.

Sunbeam, one of the great names in British car manufacturing, employed 4,500 people at the height of its success in the 1920s. But despite its reputation for quality cars, it fell into financial difficulties and production was stopped in 1935. Rootes took over but many precious records were subsequently lost or thrown out.

Much work has been done by fans of the iconic brand, who launched the Sunbeam Talbot Darracq (STD) Register in 1950 for owners and supporters,

MEMORY LANE

By Marion Brennan

to preserve documents, drawings and other data relating to the car. They are thrilled by this latest discovery.

Ben Yates, archivist of the STD Register, said: "The album is an important find. We've never had a full record for any period of production so this is really quite special. It's an official company reference volume – we never even knew of the existence of Sunbeam's own listings.

Continuous

"We have other albums of photos produced by various companies but not a continuous record of production over more than two years, showing not only all the company's products but the works, state-of-the-art machines and people working them."

The group paid almost £1,000 for the album at a recent auction by Cuttlestones in Wolverhampton. It was previously owned by a local man, now 72, whose grandfather worked at Sunbeam, thought to be as a toolmaker.

His father also worked for the company, joining directly from school, and towards the end of its existence was based in the bus section. He then transferred to Guy Motors, who bought the Sunbeam Trolleybus Company in 1949.

According to the vendor, who does not wish to be named, his father 'rescued' the album in 1935 when Sunbeam went into liquidation as the volume, along with the majority of company records were simply being thrown out.

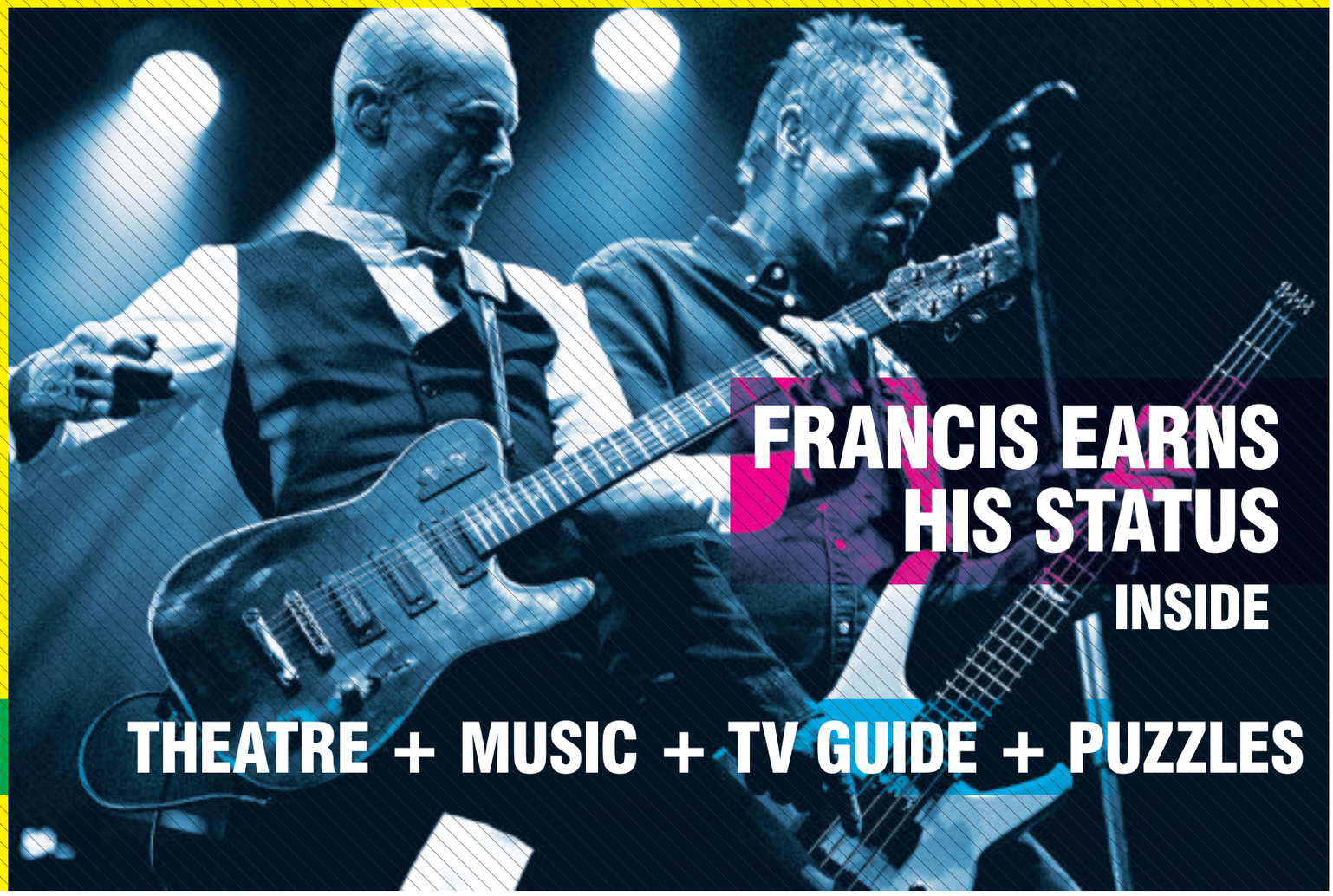
Mr Yates said: "This is a story we have heard from many former Sunbeam employees, particularly at the Wolverhampton rallies the STD organised from the 1950s until the Centenary Rally in 1999. There are, apparently, no longer any surviving employees."

Realising its importance, and with no descendants to pass the album on to, the vendor offered it for sale.

Sunbeam 16-20hp belonged to an Indian prince

How former Sunbeam factory used to look

The Ticket



FRANCIS EARNS HIS STATUS INSIDE

THEATRE + MUSIC + TV GUIDE + PUZZLES

COMMERCIAL FEATURE

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Francis: It's not the same without Rick

There's only one place to start: the death of his bandmate of 50 years, Rick Parfitt. Francis doesn't mind. He knows he's got to talk about it, that Status Quo will forever be him and Rick, that their stories and history are forever linked.

And though he's chipper about being back on the road with Quo – they play Wolverhampton's Civic Hall on Sunday – he's dutiful and respectful on the subject of his late, great bandmate.

"It's been a challenging time and it's been confusing."

Rick's place has been taken by Richie Malone, the band's new touring guitarist. He's had a profound effect.

Francis says: "If you'd have said to me this young fella will make a lot of difference to the way the band feels and plays, I'd have said don't talk rubbish. People said it was all over and we weren't doing any more show. But things change. I didn't expect it to happen. We're enjoying the shows immensely. We've just got back from Australia and Dubai and apart from the jet lag that's been great.

"I'm looking forward to it all. I really did not expect to be in this position or feeling this way."

He realises he'll get stick from diehard Quo fans, that they'll resent him for moving on and not forever wearing black.

"I understand if people are thinking I'm a schmuck. But I don't want to apologise about feeling good about the band. I don't know why it's so good: maybe it's because there's something to prove. It's not the same as it was with Rick, it's just different. There's a certain vibe within the band.

"Maybe we'd become complacent. Rick's health issues were going on for a few years and that made things difficult. Perhaps that happens to all older bands."

He's conscious of growing older, of entering the autumn of his career. But he's proud to be on the road at the age of 68. He's still got the moves, still got the voice and still loves playing the songs that have stood the test of time.

"It all moves on. The Stones were once the most rebellious band in the world and now they're 75. They've survived.

"I'm sixty-bl***y-eight. But something else is going on. You can tell I'm chipper. My manager is in the desert somewhere. But when I speak with him I'm la la la.

"We're not sure what's next. We may do another rock album, which I said I would never do. This business is great at making you go the other way. You say you're not going to do this and that. As we get older, we're worried about dribbling, but we go back to being the young person we were. That insecure little show-off in me is trying to prove something.

"I look forward to the gigs much more. That makes me question was I not looking forward to them before. It's not the same without Rick. It can't be."

His memories of Rick's passing are vivid. "It started in Turkey. As much as he died on Christmas Eve, really, he died in front of us in Turkey. He was on the floor and the medics told me he'd gone. I uncrossed his feet, they were crossed over. I watched what those people were doing to him. Our relationship was well documented. It was frosty sometimes but generally it was quite good. The PA who was with him saved him in Turkey.

"It was really quite horrible what the medical profession did to bring him round. He left the room dead but by the time we were back in London, he was sitting up and having a cup of tea. But then it was clear there was something that was wrong. That was when I thought 'Oh no'. So we got the new boy in. Rick said: 'If I kick the bucket, get him in'. We laughed about it, that was the relationship we had."

Still rocking – Francis says performing is not the same without Rick

The relationship between Francis and Richie took a while to develop. At first, Francis was frosty with the incoming, looking at him as though to ask what he was doing standing in his partner's place? But the ice slowly melted and the band moved on.

"It happens. We die and everything carries on. I've lost two aunts and an uncle recently. As soon as I come out the funeral, I go to the studio and carry on. But the thought was difficult, carrying on. As I said, something happened. Some people think we shouldn't carry on, but we had to."

He is amused at the man that he's become. Once a hellraiser and firmly anti-establishment, these days he sports an OBE and spends time in the garden. "Getting the OBE was a huge honour. If I'm really honest, I don't feel people like us deserve it. I think the midwife in Leeds does but not us. But we maintain the profile of the honours system. No one really is going to ask the nurse or the milkman what they think – they don't get the media attention. The fact that Rick and I and various others in our business get them helps to raise the profile of the honours system."

> *My best friends in showbiz are people like Roy Wood and Jeff Lynne*

He's unsure what the future holds. There may be more records and more tours, though they may take time out in 2018 to reassess and consider where they're going. If they do tour again, the Black Country and Birmingham will be high on their list of places to visit.

"I've said this before but my best friends in showbusiness are people like Roy Wood, Jeff Lynne, Robert Plant and a truck driver whose name I'm not going to tell you – and they're all from your neck of the woods. Everybody I know from the area is fabulous, genuine. There's also a couple of rasta guys who do the NEC. I see them occasionally, any of those people I meet, it's like it was only yesterday that we saw each other. I might not see them for years, but I consider them friends. I feel comfortable around your lot."

● **For more entertainment news and reviews see The Ticket in your Express & Star every Friday.**

Steps – new music after 17 years

Steps into the future with new album and party tour

It's been 20 years since Steps released their disco-tastic debut – and now they're back to celebrate with a big pop party at Arena Birmingham tomorrow (Friday).

Lisa Scott-Lee and Claire Richards are trying to work out who the Chancellor of the Exchequer was when they formed, 20 years ago, in 1997. A giggling Ian 'H' Watkins, sat behind them, tickles them. Swatting him away, Claire correctly answers 'Gordon Brown' to the delight of her bandmates, who fall about laughing at H's antics.

It's just one sign of the affinity retained by the group, who split acrimoniously at the turn of the millennium, when Claire and H wanted to form a duo. Since then things have been patched up, and the band reformed in 2011 for a Sky Living series and a string of concerts.

Now, more than five years on, with the exception of 39-year-old Claire, they have all celebrated their 40th birthdays, but that does little to deter their energy.

The five, completed by Lee Latchford-Evans and Faye Tozer, are delighted at the success of their first album proper in 17 years, Tears On The Dancefloor, and single Scared Of The Dark. They listened to that song's first play on the radio together – almost 20 years to the day after they gathered to hear their debut, 5, 6, 7, 8.

"It felt like we had started all over again," reflects H. "New music the key for us to have a new energy with Steps," says Faye, "because we couldn't have asked the fans to come and see us again with just the old songs. I think it has breathed new life into us."

The Party On The Dancefloor tour also goes to the Genting Arena on December 9.

Strictly star Joanne is back in a flash

Flashdance The Musical returns to the UK for the first time since 2011, starring Strictly Come Dancing favourite Joanne Clifton and pop star Ben Adams, at Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre from Tuesday to Saturday, December 9.

Strictly champion Joanne won both the main Strictly glitter ball, with Ore Oduba last year, and the Christmas Special in 2015 with Harry Judd.

Joanne made her musical theatre debut in Irving Berlin musical Face The Music, for which she was nominated for an award. She followed this up as Marilyn Monroe in the Norma Jeane The Musical and then trod the boards as Millie Dillmount in the UK Tour of Thoroughly Modern Millie.

Of her role as Alex Owens in the UK Tour of Flashdance, Joanne said: "This is just another dream come true. I think everyone in the world, whether dancer or non-dancer, as soon as they hear What a Feeling, remember that iconic scene at the end of the film and I'm so incredibly lucky that I get to do that every night in a UK tour. I can once again sing and act alongside dancing."

Ben who will join Joanne on stage as Nick Hurley, at 16 became the lead singer of the band a1, who racked up 10 million record sales, including two UK number ones. He is now a successful songwriter, producer and actor. He also reached the final of Celebrity Big Brother.

Of taking to the stage in Flashdance, he says: "It's amazing to be part of such an iconic story, and as an 80's child I was brought up on this music."

Flashdance The Musical is based on the hit movie and tells the story of Alex, a welder by day and 'flashdancer' by night, who will not give up on her dream of becoming a professional dancer.

Prankster Lee is a Serious Joker

The Prime Minister's least favourite comedian is at Dudley Town Hall tomorrow night (Friday). Prankster Lee Nelson caused a sensation at the Conservative Party Conference when he approached Theresa May during her speech and handed her a mock P45, claiming it was on behalf of Boris Johnson. Lee Nelson, real name Simon Brodkin, brings his Serious Joker tour to the Black Country, with his new suited and booted look after ditching the baseball cap and sportswear.

JAWS are ready to bite your Brum again

They impressed with their set at the Beyond The Tracks Festival earlier this year, and now Birmingham dream pop trio JAWS are giving home town fans another chance to see them live.

The former Halesowen College students are closing their tour with a set of swirling guitar rock at Digbeth's O2 Institute tomorrow (Friday), with Leeds indie outfit Marsicans and London band Social Contract.

JAWS are Connor Schofield on vocals and guitar, Alex Hudson on guitars and Eddy Geach on drums. A year ago they released their second album Simplicity, the follow up to 2014 debut Be Slowly.

Also tomorrow, The Charlatans are at Wolverhampton Civic Hall while Good Charlotte play the O2 Academy. Then the Academy hosts Scouting For Girls on Saturday, with Gorillaz at the Birmingham Arena.

SANDWELL CHRONICLE PUB OF THE YEAR

Recently the Sandwell Chronicle ran the Pub Of The Year Competition.

The Winner this year was Curry N Grill which is owned by Mr Kuldip Johal.The Manager of the Curry N Grill Sunil Kumar said 'We are extremely proud of this award as the pub is the hub of the community and it's great to see that our hard work is appreciated by the local people'.

Mr Kumar was presented with the Pub Of The Year certificate from the Sandwell Chronicle Entertainment Executive Daniel Eccles.

The Curry N Grill is at Walsall Road, west Bromwich - get yourselves down to Sandwell's Pub Of The Year - You won't be disappointed!

SATURDAY'S TV DECEMBER 2

CHOICE

Simon Cowell

The X Factor: Live Final (ITV, 7.05pm)

Once upon a time, the winner of The X Factor was almost guaranteed a Christmas No.1 single. Those days are now gone, but that's not to say there isn't a lot riding on this weekend's final of the singing contest. After weeks of lively auditions, gruelling boot camps, six-chair challenges and tense on-stage showdowns, the winner will be announced tomorrow. But before that, the three remaining wannabes take to the stage again here, with judges Simon Cowell, Louis Walsh, Nicole Scherzinger and Sharon Osbourne delivering their verdict. The act with the lowest public-vote figures then faces the heart-breaking prospect of finishing in third place, while the remaining two go on to battle it out.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** Nigella: At My Table. (R) **12.00** Football Focus. **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15** Live Snooker: UK Championship. Coverage of the fourth day at the Barbican Centre in York. **2.00** Live International Rugby Union. Wales v South Africa (Kick-off 2.30pm). **4.30** Final Score. **5.25** Len Goodman's Partners in Rhyme. **5.55** BBC News.

6.05 Regional Programme.

6.15 Pointless Celebrities. Sophie Ellis-Bextor, Brendan Cole, Chris Hollins, Russell Grant, Aliona Vilani, Jay McGuiness, Anton du Beke and Erin Boag compete in a "Strictly Come Dancing" edition of the quiz. (R)

7.05 Strictly Come Dancing. Only six couples remain in the running, as Tess Daly and Claudia Winkleman invite the pro-celebrity duos back to the studio for another round of performances. This time, it is Musicals Week, which means the stars and their professional dancer partners will be tackling popular routines from West End and Broadway shows. The show begins with a group performance taking the form of a routine from the soundtrack of Oliver!, before their stars are tasked with pulling off their individual dances. Judges Shirley Ballas, Darcey Bussell, Bruno Tonioli and Craig Revel Horwood are on hand to deliver their verdicts and award points to the most successful stars. However, the competitors' true fate will only be decided once the public has voted.

8.10 Michael McIntyre's Big Show. Jessie J and Stereophonics perform on-stage at London's Theatre Royal, and football pundit Alan Shearer hands over his phone for Celebrity Send to All.

9.10 Casualty. Connie puts her health at risk by maintaining a presence on the ED, Ethan shows up late for his practical consultancy exam, and Max takes a shine to new coffee shop worker Polly.

10.00 BBC News; Weather.; National Lottery Update.

10.20 Match of the Day. Gary Lineker presents action from the latest Premier League matches.

11.50 The NFL Show.

12.20 Film: Lay the Favorite. (2012) **1.50** Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.55** BBC News.

BBC2

6.15 Holiday of My Lifetime with Len Goodman. (R) **7.00** Naomi's Nightmares of Nature. **7.30** Deadly 60. (R) **8.00** Show Me What You're Made Of: UK. **8.30** Live Rugby League World Cup. **11.30** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **12.00** Raymond Blanc: How to Cook Well. (R) **12.30** Operation Snow Tiger. (R) **1.30** Mastermind. (R) **2.00** Live Snooker: UK Championship.

6.00 Rugby League World Cup. Tanya Arnold introduces highlights of the final at Brisbane Stadium, where the successors to Australia were decided after 28 matches spanning the last five weeks.

7.00 Front Row. Brenda Emmanus and a selection of critics and artists discuss the state of contemporary art in Britain, as part of a special edition focusing on this year's Turner Prize shortlist.

7.30 Galapagos – Islands of Change: Natural World. David Attenborough narrates a documentary that looks at the impact increased migration and tourism has had on the Pacific archipelago's wildlife. (R)

8.30 Dad's Army. Captain Mainwaring lets Frazer take charge of the platoon, gambling that a taste of authority will give him a more responsible attitude. (R)

9.00 Imagine – Rachel Whiteread: Ghost in the Room. A profile of Rachel Whiteread, from the controversy surrounding her 1993 Turner Prize-winning piece House, to the acclaim she achieved for creating Vienna's Holocaust Memorial.

10.05 QI XL. Romesh Ranganathan, Matt Lucas and Liza Tarbuck join regular panellist Alan Davies and host Sandi Toksvig for an extended edition of the quiz show.

10.50 Insert Name Here. Hugh Dennis, Suzannah Lipscomb, Rebecca Front and Phil Wang join captains Richard Osman and Josh Widdicombe to answer questions about famous people who share a name. (R)

11.20 Snooker: UK Championship. The second round at the Barbican Centre in York, where the matches were played over the best of 11 frames, in the prestigious ranking tournament. Hazel Irvine presents.

12.10 Snooker: UK Championship Extra. **2.10 Film:** Ratcatcher. (1999) **3.40** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Sooty. **6.10** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.20** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.45** Super 4. (R) **7.00** Mission Employable. (R) **7.05** Oddbods. (R) **7.10** Ultimate Spider-Man: Web Warriors. **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: Fangbone. (R) **8.10** Scrambled!: The Powerpuff Girls. (R) **8.30** Scrambled!: Thunderbirds Are Go. **9.00** Scrambled!: Wishfart. (R) **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** Saturday Morning with James Martin. **11.25** Gino's Italian Coastal Escape. (R) **11.55** ITV News; Weather. **12.00** The X Factor: The Semi Finals. (R) **1.30** ITV Racing: Live from Newbury. Coverage of the second day of the winter carnival at Newbury. **4.00** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **4.25** The Cruise: Sailing the Mediterranean. (R) **5.00** Paul O'Grady: For the Love of Dogs. (R) **5.25** New You've Been Framed! **5.55** Regional Programme ; Weather.

6.00 ITV News; Weather.

6.10 Ninja Warrior UK. The semi-finals arrive, and Ben Shephard, Rochelle Humes and Chris Kamara challenge the contestants who survived the heats to test their endurance on the obstacle course once again. (R)

7.05 The X Factor: Live Final. Dermot O'Leary presents the first of two live grand finals, as the remaining singers compete for approval again, and one act faces the prospect of bowing out in third place.

9.10 I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! Ant and Dec present the celebrity challenge, as the famous faces continue their ordeal in the Australian jungle.

10.15 ITV News; Weather.

10.35 Film: Rambo III. (1988) Vietnam veteran John Rambo turns down a request from his old colonel to join a mission in Soviet-occupied Afghanistan. However, when the officer is captured, Rambo sets off to save him, joining the Mujahedeen rebels in fighting against the Russian invaders. Action adventure sequel, starring Sylvester Stallone, Richard Crenna, Kurtwood Smith, Marc de Jonge and Sasson Gabai.

12.25 Jackpot247. Viewers get the chance to participate in live interactive gaming from the comfort of their sofas. **3.00** The Hungry Sailors. (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.20 Adventure Racing: 4 Deserts. **6.45** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.10** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.40** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.05** Frasier. (R) **8.35** Frasier. (R) **9.05** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **9.35** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **10.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **10.25** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **10.55** The Simpsons. (R) **11.25** The Simpsons. (R) **11.55** Come Dine with Me. (R) **12.25** Come Dine with Me. (R) **12.55** Come Dine with Me. (R) **1.30** Come Dine with Me. (R) **2.00** Come Dine with Me. (R) **2.35** A Place in the Sun: Home or Away. (R) **3.35** A Place in the Sun: Home or Away. (R) **4.35** Best Laid Plans. **5.35** Grand Designs. (R)

6.30 Channel 4 News.

7.00 Can We Live with Robots? Dancer and choreographer Akram Khan explores the impact robots and AI are having on human relationships. Khan, who has spent a year researching important international news and condensing it into dance, travels from the UK to Japan and the USA to meet the scientists harnessing manufactured intelligence in ways that could see artificially intelligent constructs entering people's lives in the near future. His findings form the basis for a special dance, in which he hopes to reflect fears and scepticism over the subject.

8.00 Film: The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel. (2011) Seven English pensioners looking for a fresh start are drawn to an advert for a hotel in the Indian city of Jaipur, and plan to spend their retirement there. They arrive to find the building dilapidated but are won over by the enthusiastic young manager, and each embarks on their own adventures in the city. Comedy drama, starring Judi Dench, Bill Nighy, Maggie Smith and Dev Patel.

10.25 Film: I, Robot. (2004) A detective is convinced a robot has killed its creator, even though it has been programmed never to harm humans. Sci-fi thriller, with Will Smith, Bridget Moynahan and Alan Tudyk.

12.40 Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA. (R) **1.30** The Last Leg. Matt Lucas and Rebecca Front join the regulars. (R) **2.25** Hollyoaks. Omnibus. Marnie is concerned about Mac. **4.30** Location, Location, Location. (R) **5.25** Draw It! (R) **5.55** Kevin Can Wait.

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **9.00** FIA Formula E. **10.45** The Gadget Show. (R) **11.45** Cruising With Jane McDonald. **12.10 Film:** A Christmas to Remember. (2016) Festive romance, starring Mira Sorvino and Cameron Mathison. **1.50 Film:** Merry Kissmas! (2015) Romance, starring Karissa Staples and Brant Daugherty. **3.35 Film:** Annie Claus Is Coming to Town. (2011) Christmas fantasy, starring Maria Thayer. **4.35** 5 News Update. **4.45 Film:** Annie Claus Is Coming to Town. (2011) Concluded. **5.25 Film:** A Dream of Christmas. (2016) Premiere. Festive romance, starring Nikki DeLoach.

6.25 5 News Update.

6.30 Film: A Dream of Christmas. (2016) Concluded.

7.10 Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. Agents in central London try to recover almost £1,900 owed in parking fines, while officers Stewart and Vic chase over £2,200 owed by a scrap yard owner to a shipping company. Finally, Stewart and Vic head to Merseyside to recover over £3,500 owed by a publishing company to an unhappy ex-employee. (R)

8.05 NCIS: New Orleans. A US Marine corporal with a passion for amateur race-car driving suffers a fatal crash while on the track, and as the agents investigate, they begin to suspect the collision might not have been as accidental as it first seemed.

8.55 5 News Weekend.

9.00 Football on 5: The Championship. Colin Murray introduces highlights from the weekend's games, including Derby County v Burton Albion from Pride Park, Sunderland v Reading from The Stadium of Light, and Bristol City v Middlesbrough from Ashton Gate.

10.00 Live Boxing. Anthony Yigit v Joe Hughes. Coverage of the bout for the European Super-Lightweight title, which takes place at Leicester Arena.

12.00 SuperCasino. Viewers get the chance to take part in live interactive gaming, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team. **3.10** When Calls the Heart. Jack is reassigned. (R) **4.40** Access. Showbiz news and gossip. (R) **4.55** House Doctor. Transforming a dingy Cheltenham house. (R) **5.20** Wildlife SOS. The work of an animal sanctuary. (R) **5.45** Chinese Food in Minutes. Two nurses learn to cook traditional oriental dishes. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four

7.00 Ancient Egypt: Life and Death in the Valley of the Kings **8.00** The Mekong River with Sue Perkins **9.00** Witnesses: A Frozen Death **10.45** The Vietnam War **11.40** What a Performance! Pioneers of Popular Entertainment **12.40** Burt Bacharach: A Life in Song **2.10** The Mekong River with Sue Perkins **3.10** Close

ITV2

12.45 Take Me Out **1.45 Film:** The Lake House (2006) **2.45** FYI Daily **2.50 Film:** The Lake House (2006) **3.50** You've Been Framed! at Christmas **4.50** I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! **6.15 Film:** Evan Almighty (2007) **7.15** FYI Daily **7.20 Film:** Evan Almighty (2007) **8.10 Film:** Wrath of the Titans (2012) **9.10** FYI Daily **9.15 Film:** Wrath of the Titans (2012) **10.15** I'm a Celebrity: Extra Camp **11.15** Family Guy **12.45** American Dad! **1.40** Release the Hounds **2.35** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **3.00** Teleshopping

ITV3

11.00 Film: Columbo: How to Dial a Murder (1978) **12.40** Agatha Christie's Marple **2.45 Film:** Santa Claus: The Movie (1985) **3.50** FYI Daily **3.55 Film:** Santa Claus: The Movie (1985) **5.00** Midsomer Murders **1.10** Wycliffe **2.05** ITV3 Nightscreen **2.30** Teleshopping

ITV4

2.55 Storage Wars: Best of the Appraisals **3.25 Film:** Superman (1978) **4.25** FYI Daily **4.30 Film:** Superman (1978) **6.20 Film:** Nacho Libre (2006) **7.20** FYI Daily **7.25 Film:** Nacho Libre (2006) **8.10 Film:** The Nutty Professor (1996) **9.10** FYI Daily **9.15 Film:** The Nutty Professor (1996) **10.00 Film:** 16 Blocks (2006) **11.00** FYI Daily **11.05 Film:** 16 Blocks (2006) **12.05 Film:** Senna (2010) **1.05** FYI Daily **1.10 Film:** Senna (2010) **2.20** River Monsters **2.45** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping

E4

11.00 The Goldbergs **12.00 Film:** Diary of a Wimpy Kid (2010) **1.55** Rude(ish) Tube Shorts **2.00** The Goldbergs **4.30** The Big Bang Theory **9.00 Film:** A Good Day to Die Hard (2013) **11.00** Gogglebox **1.05** Tattoo Fixers **2.05** Rude Tube **3.05** Gogglebox **3.55** Rude Tube **4.20** Rules of Engagement

Film4

1.00 The Muppet Christmas Carol (1992) **2.45** Letters to Juliet (2010) **4.50** Miracle on 34th Street (1947) **6.55** The Tourist (2010) **9.00** Solace (2015) **11.05** The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones (2013) **1.40** Hercules (1983) **3.50** Close

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SUNDAY'S TV DECEMBER 3

CHOICE

Julie Walters

Coastal Railways with Julie Walters
(Channel 4, 8pm)
The actress and national treasure's second journey takes her from Newcastle upon Tyne to Edinburgh by high-speed train. Along the way, she stops off at the picturesque coastal village of Alnmouth, nicknamed the Tobermory of Northumberland. Here, Julie discovers where the phrase Keep Calm and Carry On originated, at a bookshop in the village, before visiting the world's biggest gannet colony – Bass Rock in the Firth of Forth. Next, she goes out to sea with a lobster breeder, and when she reaches her final destination, the Scottish capital, she discovers the connection between the railway and the world-famous Balmoral Hotel.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **7.25** Match of the Day. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** Fern Britton Meets Stefanie Reid. **11.00** Regional Programme. **12.15** BBC News; Weather. **12.30** Flog It! (R) **12.50** Mary Berry's Country House Secrets. (R) **1.50** FA Cup Final Score. **4.15** Songs of Praise. **4.55** Blue Planet II. (R) **5.55** BBC News.

6.10 Regional Programme.

6.20 Countryfile. Helen Skelton and Sean Fletcher explore the Cleveland Way. Helen meets a group of marathon runners and a scout team who have taken responsibility for a stretch of the area, while Sean finds out about a local oral history project and joins a wildlife photographer documenting leaping salmon. Plus, Tom Heap reports on the impact of climate change and Adam Henson finds out how to become a farmer without owning a farm.

7.20 Strictly Come Dancing: The Results. Tess Daly and Claudia Winkleman reveal the results of the Musicals Week viewers' vote. Featuring music from Beverley Knight, Amber Riley and Cassidy Janson.

8.00 Blue Planet II. Footage of animals that live on the coast, including sea lions working in packs to hunt tuna in the shallows and moray eels that venture out of the water to seek out food on dry rocks. Puffins must brave predators to bring a mouthful of food back to their young and king penguins go without food for a month while they moult. Plus, footage of the bizarre Leaping Blenny, a fish that hates the water.

9.00 Howards End. Margaret resolves to uphold her engagement, while Helen leaves for Europe with no explanation. Henry proposes a plan to resolve the issues at Howards End. Last in the series.

10.00 BBC News.

10.20 Regional Programme.

10.30 Match of the Day 2. Mark Chapman reviews the latest Premier League action, featuring Manchester City v West Ham United at the Etihad Stadium and Bournemouth v Southampton at the Vitality Stadium.

11.30 Ronny Chieng: International Student.

11.55 Weather for the Week Ahead.

12.00 BBC News.

BBC2

7.05 Gardeners' World. (R) **7.35** The Secret History of the British Garden. (R) **8.35** Countryfile. (R) **9.30** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.00** Food & Drink. (R) **11.30** My Life on a Plate. (R) **12.15** MOTD2 Extra. **1.00** Live Snooker: UK Championship. Coverage of the fifth day at the Barbican Centre in York.

6.00 MOTD: FA Cup Highlights. Manish Bhasin introduces action from the second round, as the remaining 40 lower league and non-league sides looked to move a step closer to a potentially lucrative and glamourous tie in the third round.

7.00 Turkey with Simon Reeve. In the second half of the journey, Simon travels along the Black Sea Coast to the capital of Ankara and the Northern Highlands, witnessing first hand the aftermath of fighting in Kurdish areas and meeting a conservationist attempting to preserve the region's brown bears. He then returns to Istanbul, where he takes part in a popular TV series set in the palace of the Ottoman Sultans. (R)

8.00 Robot Wars. Dara Ó Briain and Angela Scanlon present the grand final, which features the biggest ever Robot Wars battle. One of the six places in the last round remains free, and to decide who gets it, all the contestants who came second or third in the past five episodes return to battle to the death. The winner in this Ten Robot Rumble will have to face the five episode winners through a series of group battles and knockout rounds before the final showdown to decide which machine will be crowned series champion. Last in the series.

9.00 Expedition Volcano. Part two of two. The team takes a helicopter to the crater of an active volcano that is surrounded by forests which provide cover for a number of armed militant groups.

10.00 Snowfall. Franklin discovers that it was Lenny who came after him, and is forced to fight back or lose everything. Lucia is powerless to stop Ramiro taking over everything she has created.

10.45 Snowfall. Franklin finds success comes at a price. Last in the series.

11.40 Snooker: UK Championship.

12.30 Snooker: UK Championship Extra. **2.30** Sign Zone: Question Time. (R) **3.30** Holby City. (R) **4.30** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Sooty. **6.10** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.20** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.45** Super 4. (R) **7.00** Mission Employable. (R) **7.05** Oddbods. (R) **7.10** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: Ben 10. **8.10** Scrambled!: Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **8.30** Scrambled!: Make It Pop. **9.00** Scrambled!: Wishfart. (R) **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** Australian Wilderness with Ray Mears. (R) **10.00** Peston on Sunday. **10.55** The Martin Lewis Money Show. (R) **11.25** Save Money: Good Food. (R) **12.00** Tipping Point. (R) **1.00** ITV News; Weather. **1.05** The X Factor: Live Final. (R) **3.10** Midsomer Murders. (R) **5.05** How to Spend It Well at Christmas with Phillip Schofield. (R)

6.05 Regional Programme; Weather.

6.15 ITV News; Weather.

6.30 The Chase Celebrity Special. Gregg Wallace, Denise Lewis, Mark Pougatch and Gina Yashere answer general knowledge questions and work as a team to secure a cash prize for charity. Presented by Bradley Walsh.

7.25 The X Factor: Live Final. Dermot O'Leary introduces the climax of this year's talent contest. The results of last night's performance at Wembley Arena are in and one of the three finalists has been eliminated from the contest. The two remaining acts must give one final performance to impress the viewing public and the judges, before one of them is crowned as this year's winner. Last in the series.

9.00 I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! Ant and Dec present the celebrity challenge, as the famous faces continue their ordeal in the Australian jungle.

10.30 ITV News; Weather.

10.45 Peston on Sunday. Political magazine, presented by Robert Peston and Allegra Stratton. Last in the series. (R)

11.45 Car Crash Britain: Caught on Camera. Road accidents and near-misses, including a woman who had a close shave when a car ploughed into her office, parallel parking calamities and a new driver with no beginners' luck. (R)

12.35 Jackpot247. **3.00** Motorsport UK. **3.50** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.20 Kevin Can Wait. **6.45** Kevin Can Wait. **7.10** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.35** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** Paul Hollywood: A Baker's Life. (R) **1.00** F1 2017: Hamilton's Record Breaking Season. **2.00** The Simpsons. (R) **2.30** The Simpsons. (R) **2.55** The Simpsons. (R) **3.25** The Simpsons. (R) **3.55 Film:** Arthur Christmas. (2011) Animated comedy, with the voice of James McAvoy. **5.50 Film:** Shrek. (2001) Animated comedy, with the voice of Mike Myers.

7.30 Channel 4 News.

8.00 Coastal Railways with Julie Walters. The actress travels from Newcastle to Edinburgh by high speed train. Along the way, she stops off at the coastal town of Alnmouth, discovers where the phrase Keep Calm and Carry On originated, visits the world's biggest gannet colony, and goes out to sea with a lobster breeder. When she reaches her destination, she discovers the connection between the railway and the famous Balmoral Hotel.

9.00 Film: Mission: Impossible – Ghost Protocol. (2011) Secret agent Ethan Hunt and his team are implicated in a bombing at the Kremlin, forcing the American president to declare them fugitives. The spies plan to clear their name by abducting the real terrorist, which leads them into a pursuit around the globe. However, Hunt cannot be sure his colleagues are trustworthy. Action adventure sequel, starring Tom Cruise, Jeremy Renner, Simon Pegg and Paula Patton.

11.35 Film: I, Frankenstein. (2014) The scientist's monster is caught up in a war between supernatural beings who want the secret of his immortality. Fantasy adventure, with Aaron Eckhart and Bill Nighy.

1.15 Film: Morning Glory. (2010) Comedy, starring Rachel McAdams. **3.00** Trump: An American Dream. A new wife, a hit TV show and the ultimate prize in world politics. Last in the series. (R) **3.55** Gillette World Sport. Including a profile of fixed-gear cyclist Patrick Seabase. **4.25** KOTV Boxing Weekly. **4.50** Mobil 1 The Grid. (R) **5.20** Kirstie's Handmade Treasures. (R) **5.35** Countdown. With Richard Madeley in Dictionary Corner. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Little Princess. **6.10** Wanda and the Alien. (R) **6.20** Poppy Cat. (R) **6.35** Wissper. (R) **6.40** Milkshake! Monkey. (R) **6.45** Milkshake! Bopping About. (R) **6.50** Simon. (R) **6.55** Peppa Pig. (R) **7.00** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.15** Digby Dragon. **7.30** Fireman Sam. (R) **7.45** Olly the Little White Van. (R) **7.55** Paw Patrol. (R) **8.10** Noddy: Toyland Detective. (R) **8.25** Shimmer and Shine. (R) **8.40** Peppa Pig. (R) **8.50** Peppa Pig. (R) **8.55** FIA Formula E. **10.40** Football on 5: The Championship. (R) **11.25 Film:** Finding Father Christmas. (2016) **1.10 Film:** The Christmas Secret. (2014) Drama, starring Bethany Joy Lenz. **2.55 Film:** On the 12th Day of Christmas. (2015) Premiere. Romantic drama, starring Brooke Nevin and Robin Dunne. **3.55** 5 News Update. **4.00 Film:** On the 12th Day of Christmas. (2015) Concluded. **4.45 Film:** Northpole: Open for Christmas. (2015) Premiere. Festive fantasy sequel, starring Bailee Madison. **5.45** 5 News Update. **5.50 Film:** Northpole: Open for Christmas. (2015) Concluded.

6.30 Film: Call Me Claus. (2001) A cynical female TV producer hires a man to play Santa Claus in a programme. He turns out to be the real Father Christmas, and has come on a special mission to melt her icy heart and persuade her to take over the reindeer reins as the new face of the festive season. Family drama, starring Whoopi Goldberg, Nigel Hawthorne, Brian Mitchell and Victor Garber.

8.15 Aviva Premiership Rugby Highlights. Mark Durden-Smith and David Flatman present action from the 10th round of matches, including Northampton Saints v Newcastle Falcons, Exeter Chiefs v Bath, and Harlequins v Saracens.

8.55 5 News Weekend.

9.00 The Paul O'Grady Story. Profile of the talk show host, exploring his formative years as a social worker and showbiz career appearing as both himself and his drag act alter ego Lily Savage. (R)

10.35 When Reality TV Goes Horribly Wrong. Vicky Pattison narrates a countdown of disastrous incidents on reality shows, featuring Nikki Grahame, Bianca Gascoigne, Paul Danan and Jessie Cave.

1.30 Lip Sync Battle UK: Carol Vorderman v Martin Kemp. (R) **1.55** SuperCasino. **3.10** Bargain-Loving Brits in Blackpool. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four
7.00 Great Continental Railway Journeys **7.30** University Challenge **8.00** Classic Quartets at the BBC **9.00** Natural World **10.40** Britain's Wild Places **11.00 Film:** Taxi Tehran (2015) **12.20** Classic Quartets at the BBC **1.20** Natural World **3.00** Close

ITV2
11.25 Take Me Out **12.40** You've Been Framed! at Christmas **1.10** Merry Christmas Mr Bean **1.45** The Smurfs: A Christmas Carol **2.15 Film:** Beethoven's Christmas Adventure (2011) **3.15** FYI Daily **3.20 Film:** Beethoven's Christmas Adventure (2011) **4.05** I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! **5.10 Film:** Nanny McPhee and the Big Bang (2010) **6.15** FYI Daily **6.20 Film:** Nanny McPhee and the Big Bang (2010) **7.20 Film:** The Amazing Spider-Man (2012) **8.20** FYI Daily **8.25 Film:** The Amazing Spider-Man (2012) **10.00** Family Guy **10.30** I'm a Celebrity: Extra Camp **11.35** Family Guy **12.30** American Dad! **1.30** Release the Hounds **2.25** Teleshopping **5.55** ITV2 Nightscreen

ITV3
11.30 FYI Daily **11.35 Film:** Santa Claus: The Movie (1985) **12.40 Film:** Columbo: Death Hits the Jackpot (1991) **2.45** Agatha Christie's Marple **4.50** Midsomer Murders **9.00** Endeavour **11.00** Lewis **1.00** The Knock **3.00** Sherlock Holmes: The Sign of Four **4.50** Judge Judy **5.30** ITV3 Nightscreen

ITV4
11.30 Film: Superman (1978) **12.30** FYI Daily **12.35 Film:** Superman (1978) **2.25 Film:** The Dam Busters (1954) **3.25** FYI Daily **3.30 Film:** The Dam Busters (1954) **5.00** British Touring Car Championship Highlights **7.05 Film:** Nacho Libre (2006) **8.05** FYI Daily **8.10 Film:** Nacho Libre (2006) **9.00 Film:** The Dictator (2012) **10.00** FYI Daily **10.05 Film:** The Dictator (2012) **10.40 Film:** Hot Tub Time Machine 2 (2015) **11.40** FYI Daily **11.45 Film:** Hot Tub Time Machine 2 (2015) **12.30 Film:** Mars Attacks! (1996) **1.30** FYI Daily **1.35 Film:** Mars Attacks! (1996) **2.40** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping

E4
11.00 Made in Chelsea **12.00** Don't Tell the Bride **1.00 Film:** Marmaduke (2010) **2.45** Rude(ish) Tube Shorts **3.00** The Goldbergs **4.30** The Big Bang Theory **9.00 Film:** Ted (2012) **11.05** The Big Bang Theory **12.05** Gogglebox **1.05** Rude Tube **2.10** First Dates **3.05** Rude Tube **3.35** Hollyoaks

COMMERCIAL FEATURE

Celebrate Peaky Blinders At The White Swan Oldbury!!

Starting from the 1st and throughout December, The team has transformed the White Swan into a Peaky Blinders set!!

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PICK OF THE WEEK

FILM CHOICES

MONDAY
The Christmas Calendar, Channel 5, 3.45pm
Emily has just taken over her grandmother's failing bakery and discovers that if she doesn't attract enough customers by Christmas, she will lose it. Finding new customers proves tough, but when she receives a handmade Advent calendar from a secret admirer, the local residents become obsessed with finding out the identity of the sender. Festive romantic drama, starring Laura Bell Bundy. (2017)

TUESDAY
Call Me Claus, Channel 5, 3.40pm
A cynical female TV producer hires a man to play Santa Claus in a programme. He turns out to be the real Father Christmas, and has come on a special mission to melt her icy heart and persuade her to take over the reindeer reins as the new face of the festive season. Family drama, starring Whoopi Goldberg, Nigel Hawthorne and Victor Garber. (2001)

Brick Mansions, Thursday, Channel 5, 9pm

WEDNESDAY
Spirit of Christmas, Channel 5, 2pm
When brokering the sale of a haunted inn, a lawyer meets a charming ghost who lives there, and she ends up agreeing to help him discover the truth behind his death. Romantic drama, starring Jen Lilley and Thomas Beaudoin. (2015)

THURSDAY
Brick Mansions, Channel 5, 9pm
A ghetto of Detroit is walled off from the rest of the city to contain its criminal population. A cop out for revenge and an ex-convict trying to save his kidnapped girlfriend are forced to team up to stop a drug kingpin carrying out a plan that could destroy the entire city. US remake of French action adventure District 13, starring Paul Walker. (2014)

FRIDAY
Christmas Under Wraps, Channel 5, 3.45pm
When a doctor fails to get the position she wanted, she ends up moving to a remote Alaskan town and unexpectedly ends up finding love and happiness, and discovers that the small town is hiding a big holiday secret. Drama, starring Candace Cameron Bure, David O'Donnell and Robert Pine. (2014)

Kirstie gets in the festive spirit in new one-off show

What started out as a pleasant diversion is turning into a national institution.

In 2009, Kirstie Allsopp – who was previously best known for her property expertise thanks to the show Location Location Location – fronted Kirstie's Handmade Home, in which she decorated her new Devon house with craft items she made herself.

The format has since widened to encompass Kirstie's Handmade Britain, Kirstie's Vintage Home, Fill Your House for Free, and several other shows, including this now annual festive series.

In the meantime, Allsopp is also the face of The Handmade Fair, which takes place every September at Hampton Court, and offers visitors an opportunity to meet makers and buy the materials needed to produce their own crafty products.

It's certainly a far cry from selling properties. In the years since her first dabble into the world of the handmade, crafts have really risen in popularity, with thousands across the country taking up knitting, crochet, sewing, baking, woodwork and more.

Did Allsopp's show and others along similar lines inspire folk, or did they reflect an already growing trend that began as the public attempted to find ways to save money in an uncertain economic climate? That's a topic still up for discussion, but whatever the answer, it seems that for the foreseeable future, crafts are here to stay.

For Allsopp, taking part in the programmes has turned a casual interest into a passion.

"I think it's always interested me, but I never thought I was capable of doing it," she says of the crafting world. "So I would buy it. I'd see something that was made with love and care, and I would purchase it. I never really thought I was capable of that.

"I was a very early advocate of the immaculate Christmas, making a big effort with that kind of stuff. But it was a surprising discovery for me that I was capable of making things myself."

However, she does admit defeat in some areas, but thinks that a fear of failure shouldn't put people off trying new things.

"The ones that I can't get good at involve knitting, crocheting, cross-stitching - I just can't feel my way towards them," she admits. "But a lot of the crafts are made much, much more difficult on the show by the time aspect, and by having the cameras there.

"There are times when you see me throwing a wobbly, but the truth is, I'm throwing a wobbly at the process of being filmed while under this kind of pressure. That is what gets to you - because you are doing this flower arrangement, for example, and someone will say 'Kirstie, can you talk about what you're feeling now?'"

Hopefully no wobblers will be thrown in the first of the latest run, which sees Allsopp get the ball rolling with a detailed handmade fairy and delicate diorama baubles.

Kirstie's Handmade Christmas, Tuesday, Channel 4, 8pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY
The Real Marigold on Tour
BBC1, 9pm
The familiar faces are back, but this time they're not heading for India – instead, they're hitting the road for a variety of geriatric adventures. Each destination will be visited by a different group, but they all have two things in common - to learn how countries across the globe treat their pensioners, and to find out if they could live there themselves. It's a four-part run that begins when Miriam Margolyes, Wayne Sleep, Bobby George and Rosemary Shrager travel to Chengdu, the capital of China's Sichuan Province. More than 14 million people live there, and the population is ageing fast. It isn't Miriam's first trip to the country, but she struggles with the food while all of the travellers find the language barrier rather difficult to surmount.

TUESDAY
Extraordinary Teens: My Gay Life
Channel 4, 10pm
There are shades of Richard Linklater's acclaimed, Oscar-winning drama Boyhood to this documentary – except this film charts real events in the life of the child we are watching grow up before our very eyes. The project began in 2011, when cameras first captured a then 11-year-old boy called Billy. Over the course of five years, the film-makers followed the youngster, charting his teenage life. The result is a portrait not just of one boy, but of childhood, adolescence and family.

WEDNESDAY
Mary Berry's Country House Secrets
BBC1, 8pm
Mary visits Powderham Castle in Devon to spend time with the Earl and Countess of Devon and their two young children, who are reinventing the Earldom for the 21st century. Mary's time with the family reveals stories of romance and tragedy as she discovers more of this extraordinary home. In the castle's historic kitchen, Mary prepares a Devon cream tea, before making a delicate peach posset for a Midsummer Eve woodland party the family are throwing to celebrate their two year anniversary at the castle.

THURSDAY
Great Canal Journeys
Channel 4, 8pm
Timothy West and Prunella Scales return to Wales to explore a canal that has eluded them for more than half a century. The Monmouthshire and Brecon canal is cut off from the rest of Britain's network of waterways by the Black Mountains, and meanders its way through the tranquil Usk valley. Along the way the couple visit the old ironworks at Blaenavon, where children as young as five were once put to work, and lend a hand with some lock restoration work. They also explore the 15th-century castle at Tretower - which is rumoured to be haunted.

The Real Marigold on Tour, Monday, BBC1, 9pm

FRIDAY
Brunel: The Man Who Built Britain
Channel 5, 8pm
Victorian visionary Isambard Kingdom Brunel is still regarded as one of Britain's greatest ever engineers – which is probably just the way he'd like it. In this two-part documentary, Rob Bell takes closer look at both Brunel's extraordinary achievements and the complex personality that drove them, and discovers that he was obsessed with public acclaim. He would also stop at nothing to bring his projects to fruition – as well as risking his own life, hundreds of people were killed while working for him. In the first episode, Rob examines Brunel's first major project, the Thames Tunnel, which is still in use today as part of the London Overground rail. Construction began in 1825, under the direction of Brunel's father Marc, while Isambard was appointed chief engineer at the age of just 19.

The Year in Music 2017
BBC2, 9pm
Last year, most of the music retrospectives seemed to focus on the big names we'd lost in 2016, including David Bowie, Prince and Leonard Cohen. But hopefully, this end-of-the-year round-up will prove to be a more celebratory affair as Claudia Winkleman and Clara Amfo look back at the musical highlights from the past 12 months, including the best albums, the biggest artists and some of the most unforgettable performances. Among the stars offering their take on 2017 are the Foo Fighters, Liam Gallagher, Stormzy, Nile Rodgers, Dua Lipa, Nick Grimshaw, Mistajam, and Jo Whiley, while Rag ën' Bone Man obliges with an exclusive performance. And just to confirm who's had a good year, the winners of the 2017 BBC Music Awards will be announced.

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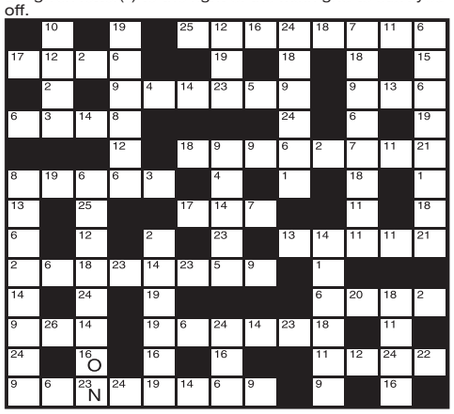
BRAIN GYM

No.458

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



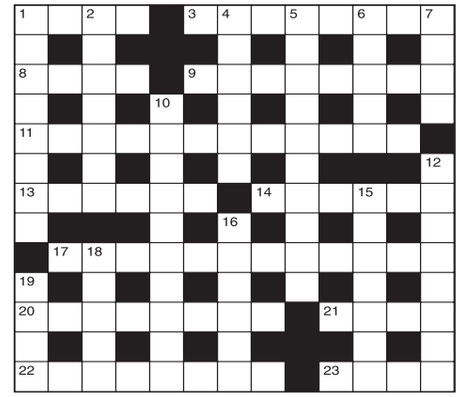
1	14
2	15
3	16 O
4	17
5	18
6	19
7	20
8	21
9	22
10	23 N
11	24
12	25
13	26

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
O	A	J	B	P	M	D	W	Z	T	S	G	I
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
U	L	E	H	F	C	R	N	K	V	Y	Q	X

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.



Cryptic Clues:

Across

1. Lay off the wine (4)
3. Agitated girl with unusually neat figure (8)
8. Puts away in great style (4)
9. One way of saying one doesn't like it (8)
11. Progressed with amorous overtures? (4,8)
13. Concerning bets on races (6)
14. Walk slowly along the street with a list (6)
17. One of the smoothest parts of the course (7,5)
20. Remained and gave personal service (6,2)
21. Something final to any buffoon (4)
22. Threatening to re-adjust my ration (8)
23. Bank of Scotland (4)

Down

1. Vessels pilots take in the morning (8)
2. Keep changing dialect (7)
4. Always come up about six to refresh (6)
5. It provides an opportunity for advanced theatrical work (5,5)
6. A leading publication? (5)
7. A misshapen nose ages (4)
10. Simple way in which the affluent live (4,6)
12. Learnt by arrangement in Malawi (8)
15. One pair moved out of doors (4,3)
16. People enter for this sort of sport (6)
18. A joining of hands in marriage or work (5)
19. In tennis Wimbledon is one way to make progress (4)

Quick Clues:

Across

1. Image (4)
3. Set going (8)
8. Row (4)
9. Promontory (8)
11. Falsify (12)
13. Topics (6)
14. Fitting (6)
17. Betterment (12)
20. Baffle (8)
21. Despicable (4)
22. Scornful (8)
23. Dam across a river (4)

Down

1. Familiar (8)
2. Superintend (7)
4. Joyous (6)
5. Manufacturing (10)
6. Once more (5)
7. Whirlpool (4)
10. Insubordinate (10)
12. Majesty (8)
13. Archbishop (7)
16. Woodworker (6)
18. Lesser (5)
19. Frozen (4)

Sudoku

7			5				1	
		3			1	6	8	
9				7				2
	1	7	9				2	4
				2	3			
6	9				7	5		1
1					2			
	5	4	7			2		
	3				8		7	5

Fill in the grid above so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

1	5	8	7	6	4	2	3	9
4	9	2	8	3	1	6	7	5
6	7	3	9	2	5	1	8	4
7	1	5	6	8	3	9	4	2
8	4	6	1	9	2	7	5	3
3	2	9	5	4	7	8	1	6
2	3	7	4	1	6	5	9	8
9	6	1	3	5	8	4	2	7
5	8	4	2	7	9	3	6	1

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:
CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Obsolescent; 9 Isolate; 10 Lisle; 11 Hindi; 12 Dentist; 13 Impend; 15 Scorer; 18 Good day; 20 Lyric; 22 Least; 23 Leisure; 24 Secretaries. Down: 2 Brown; 3 Ovation; 4 Emends; 5 Colon; 6 Nastier; 7 Nightingale; 8 Test cricket; 14 Profane; 16 Collier; 17 Eyelet; 19 Deter; 21 Rouse.
QUICK - Across: 1 Furthermore; 9 Stirrup; 10 Given; 11 Anele; 12 Ontario; 13 Levity; 15 Asleep; 18 Surplus; 20 Trait; 22 Edict; 23 Elation; 24 Undertaking. Down: 2 Unite; 3 Torrent; 4 Employ; 5 Might; 6 Reverie; 7 Established; 8 Incompetent; 14 Version; 16 Set-back; 17 Assent; 19 Lithe; 21 Alien.

Quiz

1. Whose husband was King Prasutagus?
2. Of which country is the Orszaggyules the national assembly?
3. Which heavyweight boxer collapsed after his defeat by Herbie Hide?
4. Which Mr Moto star was born Laszlo Loewenstein?
5. Where was the first Test match between England and Australia played in 1880?
6. Who is the Greek counterpart of the Roman Jupiter?
7. In which country did kung fu originate?
8. Which fruit comes from the plant Rubus idaeus?
9. Which condition was treated by the Kenny method?
10. Who won a director's Oscar for The Last Emperor?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Dyslexia or alexia; 2 A bird; 3 The Wombles; 4 Elvis Costello; 5 William McKinley; 6 Parrot; 7 Dawn French; 8 Films; 9 Asteroid; 10 Sir Lancelot.

Niner: CAVERNOUS

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

51381 gives a colour,
87114 gives a second colour,
9612 gives coloured.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

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A taste of quality Indian cuisine

Famed for its horn dance and its Best Kept Village success, Abbots Bromley has another thing worth putting it on the map – the Royal Ruchi restaurant.

This year, parishioners tasted double success in the large village category for East Staffordshire and the Community Council of Staffordshire's trophy for the whole county. And, to celebrate, they had a sample of what was on offer at the Bagot Street eatery with a six-course taster menu.

While the traditional horn dance dates back to the Middle Ages, the Royal Ruchi has only just over a decade of service to the village to fall back upon. It has a country cottage feel, with beams across the ceiling and has a subtle warm colour scheme.

Royal Ruchi in Abbots Bromley

The lamb course was a highlight of the evening

INDULGE

Owner Rafique Chowdhury has 30-plus years experience within the industry, having previously owned Saleem Bagh in Cannock and the Zafroni restaurants in both Cannock and Birmingham.

Its tasting menu is designed to increase the knowledge of the average Indian foodie while at the same time enhancing the Indian culinary experience. It allows the diner to sit back and not worry about what to choose from the menu, but instead to anticipate and indulge in the next offering.

My husband and I were greeted by Mr Chowdhury and his enganging staff and we were escorted to our table. Our welcome drinks of a glass of lemon sherbet and gin topped with Prosecco made the perfect start.

The first course presented to us was the Amuse Bouche, a spiced masala chicken soup with dhal puri – described as a mother's fresh homemade breakfast item cooked on Saturday mornings in the homes of Delhi. It was served with soft puffed bread filled with mildly spiced lentils – one of my favourites from the evening. For the second course, subz trio consisted of three small starter samples, namely chilli paneer – cubes of cottage cheese tossed with chilli; gol gappa – a crowd-pleasing Indian street food snack and aloo tikka – mashed potato patties mixed with spices, a north Indian delicacy found in the cafe-style eateries. We were pleasantly surprised by both.

Fish was the third course, comprising pan-grilled fillet of sea bass served on a bed of Goan creamy cheese spinach. The presentation was subtle, yet stunning and the sea bass was cooked to perfection. Next up was a sample of three different chicken options served with a salad mix. Murgh dalcha – delicately spiced chicken cutlets; malia tikka – Tandoori cooked chicken supreme and Hariyali tikka – chicken breast rubbed with an intoxicating paste. Again all three were thoroughly enjoyed.

We were next presented with the lamb course, their signature supreme carved Maharaja roast lamb, marinated in Mughal spices, served with moong chana daal, rice and freshly baked Tandoori bread. It looked and tasted magnificent – the star of the evening for us.

But there was more! The dessert was served on a slate plate, and consisted of three mini puds; rose gulab jamun – a berry sized sphere soaked in rose flavoured sugar syrup; tusha shinni– a lightly spiced, soft, sweet dessert, a recipe passed down from the chef's ancestors and sweet caramel ice cream.

The food and service was quality and Mr Chowdhury's passion to showcase all that was on offer was evident. Book at Royal Ruchi on 01283 840008.

BY SHARON OSCAR

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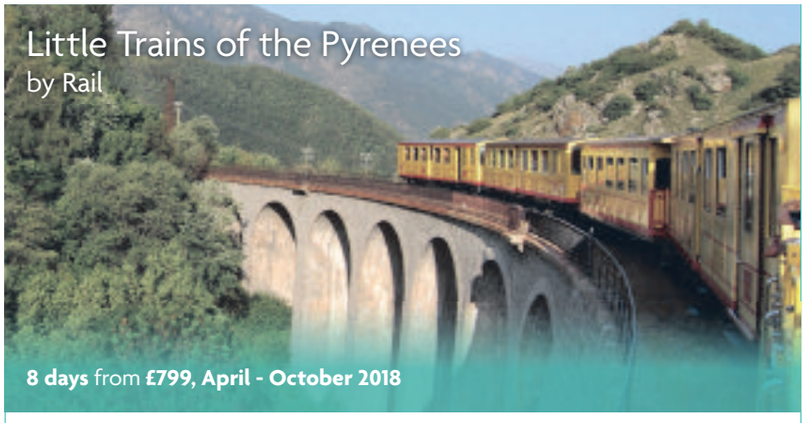
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PROPERTY

YOUR WEEKLY GUIDE TO HOME BUYING AND LETTING

Three-bedroomed semi-detached in convenient location

Set in a quiet, yet convenient residential location, 24 Kendal Rise, Oldbury, is a deceptively spacious semi-detached house in need of general updating and decoration.

Within walking distance of shops, schools and recreational facilities, it is for sale through Tom Giles Estate Agents at £204,950.

It has gas central heating and majority double glazing and stands set back from the roadside behind a tarmac driveway and lawned garden.

It has an entrance hall with a cloakroom/WC off, a lounge with a brick fireplace and a marble hearth, a bow window and a sliding door to the dining room, which in turn has a glazed door to a side verandah.

The kitchen has base units and a wall cupboard, working surfaces, an L-shaped workshop, a built-in "Prestige" oven, "Creda" four-plate gas hob and extractor canopy, a built-in refrigerator, a worktop/breakfast bar with a base unit, splash-back tiling and vinyl floor and a door to the side verandah. This has vinyl flooring, a door to the garage and patio doors to the rear garden.

A staircase leads from the lounge to a first floor landing.

Bedroom one is positioned to the front, having a range of built-in bedroom furniture including a double wardrobe, a bed reveal with bedside tables and eye-level storage cupboards above and a further double wardrobe.

Bedroom two lies to the rear, while bedroom three is positioned to the front.

There is also a shower room with an ivory suite in full-height tiling.

Outside is a tarmacadamed driveway to the front, a lawn with a side border containing a privet hedgerow and mature plants and access to the rear.

The garage has light and power, an up and over door and a door to the side verandah.

To the rear of the property is a paved patio, side borders containing an abundance of herbaceous plants, shrubs and trees, a footpath with a lawn either side being enclosed by conifer hedgerow, a brick boundary wall and fencing.

OLDBURY £204,950

TO VIEW THIS PROPERTY

AGENT: Tom Giles
TEL: 0121 522 6171
EMAIL: general@tomgiles.net

KEY FEATURES

Semi-detached
Deceptively spacious
3 bedrooms
Quiet cul-de-sac
In need of updating

Three bed-bungalow offers versatile space

TIPTON
£210,000

A spacious and very versatile three double-bedroomed detached bungalow in Bagnall Street, Ocker Hill, Tipton, is for sale through Skitts estate agents at £210,000.

The property is very versatile as the current owner is actually using one of the bedrooms as a dining room.

It has an easy to maintain front garden and much the same to the rear.

It also has an 18-foot lounge and a 21-foot kitchen/diner, a family bathroom, front and rear gardens, off-street parking for several vehicles, a carport/storage, double glazing and majority gas fired central heating.

For further information, or to book a viewing, contact Skitts on 0121 520 2255.

Semi-detached property is spacious and well presented

OLDBURY
£229,950 <<<

This three-bedroomed semi-detached house in Mehdi Road, Oldbury, is spacious and well presented throughout.

It is for sale through Tom Giles estate agents at £229,950. With double glazing and gas central heating, it has an entrance hall, a dining room, cloakroom/WC, lounge and kitchen, three bedrooms, an en-suite shower room and a family bathroom, garage and parking and a rear garden.

It is within walking distance of shopping facilities at Dudley Road East and more comprehensive facilities available at nearby Oldbury town centre.

Public transport services are also available close by providing links into Oldbury, West Bromwich, Dudley and other surrounding areas.

Call 0121 5526171.

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6 Warley Court, Moat Rd, Oldbury
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2 Bed Mid Terraced House
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124 Oldbury Road, Rowley Regis
2 Bed Detached Cottage
Guide: £30,000+ (plus fees)

16 Overdale Road, Quinton
3 Bed Semi Detached House
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80 Atlantic Road, Great Barr
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SDL AUCTIONS

BIGWOOD

AUCTION

14th December 2017

at Aston Villa Football Ground

View: 1/12 @ 14:45; 4/12 @ 14:45; 6/12 @ 10:00; 9/12 @ 9:45

132 Wilkes Avenue, Walsall
3 bed semi detached house with central heating and majority double glazing
Guide: £59,000 - £64,000 (plus fees)

View: 1/12 @ 10:00; 2/12 @ 13:30; 4/12 @ 10:00; 6/12 @ 15:15

56 Bridgelands Way, Perry Barr
3 bed duplex maisonette with central heating and majority double glazing
Guide: £19,000 - £24,000 (plus fees)

View: 1/12 @ 11:45; 4/12 @ 11:45; 6/12 @ 13:30; 8/12 @ 11:45

50 Cedar Avenue, Bilston
3 bed semi detached house with with central heating and majority double glazing
Guide: £59,000 - £64,000(plus fees)

View: 1/12 @ 14:15; 4/12 @ 14:15; 6/12 @ 11:00; 8/12 @ 14:15

16 Overdale Road, Quinton
3 bed semi detached house with gardens and driveway parking
Guide: £50,000 + (plus fees)

View: 1/12 @ 12:45; 4/12 @ 12:45; 6/12 @ 12:00; 9/12 @ 11:15

86 Bolton Road, Wolverhampton
3 bed house with land to the rear, with development potential, subject to planning
Guide: £29,000-£34,000 (plus fees)

View: 1/12 @ 12:00; 2/12 @ 12:00; 4/12 @ 12:00; 6/12 @ 12:45

98 Ellerton Walk, Wolverhampton,
Long leasehold 3 bed duplex maisonette with part double glazing
Guide: £10,000 + (plus fees)

View: 1/12 @ 14:00; 4/12 @ 14:00, 6/12 @ 10:45; 9/12 @ 10:30

52 Commonside, Brierley Hill
3 bed mid terraced house with central heating and majority double glazing
Guide: £29,000-£34,000 (plus fees)

View: 1/12 @ 14:00; 4/12 @ 14:00, 6/12 @ 10:45; 9/12 @ 10:30

8 Riding Way, Willenhall
3 bed semi detached house with central heating and majority double glazing
Guide: £50,000 + (plus fees)

View: 1/12 @ 11:00; 2/12 @ 11:00; 4/12 @ 11:00; 6/12 @ 14:15

60 Fisher Street, Tipton
Long leasehold 2 bed duplex maisonette with central heating
Guide: £15,000 - £19,000 (plus fees)

View: 1/12 @ 10:45; 4/12 @ 10:45; 6/12 @ 14:00; 9/12 @ 13:15

30 Filey Road, Wolverhampton
3 bed end terraced house
Guide: £25,000 + (plus fees)

View: 1/12 @ 11:15 4/12 @ 11:15, 6/12 @ 13:30; 9/12 @ 12:45

360 Stafford Road, Wolverhampton
3 bed detached bungalow
Guide: £50,000 + (plus fees)

View: 1/12 @ 10:00; 4/12 @ 10:00, 6/12 @ 14:45; 9/12 @ 12:00

112 Old Heath Road, Wolverhampton
3 bed semi detached house
Guide: £39,000-£44,000 (plus fees)

View: 1/12 @ 15:15; 4/12 @ 15:15; 6/12 @ 10:00; 8/12 @ 15:15

30 Marjoram Close, Kings Norton
3 bed mid terraced town house
Guide: £50,000 + (plus fees)

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Please note charges may apply in addition to the purchase price. Any additional fees will be confirmed in the legal pack which can be downloaded from our website, inspected at our offices or in the auction room before bidding. For a definition of Guide Price & Reserve Price please refer to our catalogue or website. For the Energy Performance Rating of each property please refer to the legal pack, our catalogue or website. Please contact our office for further details or advice.

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Fast low cost , same day repairs
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*Tree Surgeon Specialist *Stump Grinding/Root Removal
*Hedges Pruned/Shaped *Jungles Cleared/Full Landscapes
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To advertise your business and reach more than 61,597 potential customers...

1 Call us on... 01902 319590

2 E-mail us at... mark.moore@expressandstar.co.uk

3 Post to... Mark Moore, Sandwell Chronicle, Black Country House, Rounds Green Road, Oldbury B69 2DG

Local Specialists

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Are your Gutters Ready for Winter?
Are they blocked? Full of Dirt, Leafs & Moss?
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AVOID COSTLY REPAIR BILLS
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All installations and repairs
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No job too small. Friendly service. Free advice and quotes
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Premium Products Expertly Fitted With Full Manufacture Guarantee.
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For competitive quotes on all your refurbishment needs on plastering, boarding, overboarding, partitions, re-skimming and artex covering.
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FMB

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Friendly service
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✓ BATHROOM SUITES ✓ TAPS
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A CHEAP RUBBISH REMOVAL 7 DAYS
Small Jobs NO PROBLEM
We load, No Skips, Free Estimates
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(General Plumbing and Bathrooms)
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Tel: Neil 07968 786449 - 0121-602 6776
www.household-plumbing.co.uk

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1 Call us on... 01902 319590
2 E-mail us at... mark.moore@expressandstar.co.uk
3 Post to... Mark Moore, Sandwell Chronicle, Black Country House, Rounds Green Road, Oldbury B69 2DG

Classified Ads

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Turn To Us For Help and Support

In your time of need we'll take care of all the funeral arrangements.

- Est. 1907
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Funeral Directors
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Part of Dignity plc. A British Company.

1 Family

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Elderly & Disabled

ACORN STAIRLIFT
Private sale. Straight staircase. Price includes delivery and fitting by Acorn installer and 3 months warranty. Immaculate condition.
£800.
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READERS ARE REMINDED to check with any Advertisers that their holiday costs are fully covered by a recognised bonding or insurance scheme.

mind, body & soul

Massage

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what's on

Antique Fairs

ANTIQUE/ VINTAGE FAIR
CALFHEATH HALL, CALFHEATH CANNOCK, WV10 7DW
SUNDAY DECEMBER 3RD
9 AM - 15:30 PM
07783 680 627

Christmas Events

CHRISTMAS FAYRE
St Mark's Church,
Ocker Hill Road, Tipton,
DY4 0UT
Saturday,
December 2, 1pm.

Craft Fairs

CRAFT FAYRE
December 2, 2017.
at 11 am to 2pm.
St. Peter's Church,
Whitehall Road,
West Bromwich.

3 Home & Services

Furniture

FURNITURE NOT SOLD? Donate it to Katharine House Hospice. We collect for free. Telephone Cannock 01543 466885, Stafford 01785 247630, House clearance service 01785 760715.

katharine house hospice
Reg charity number: 1011712
Furniture not sold, why not donate it?
We can turn your quality used furniture into 1st class care for patients at Katharine House
Call us now on 01785 760715
for details or to arrange a FREE collection

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ONE WEEK ONLY - BIG DISCOUNTS
Cookers, Fires, Autos, Tumble dryers, Built in ovens, Hobs, Fridge freezers, lots more at low prices.
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BLOXWICH FENCING
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That the Business Advertisements (Disclosure) Order of 1977 requires that advertisements must clearly differentiate between Private and Trade.

ASH RECLAMATION new and used building materials, upvc doors and windows 01543 453222.

ASH RECLAMATION
All reclaimed building materials
UPVC doors and windows
New and Used
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01543 453222
07956 627367

Items Wanted

✔ CASH PAID ✔
£300+ PER OUNCE
FOR 9 CARAT GOLD.
ANY AMOUNT COLLECTED!
HOUSE CLEARANCES!
*gold coins, **pre - 47 silver** coins, **watches**, costume jewellery, porcelain, any **oriental items**, old brass items, any silver items, War **medals** military etc.*
Lady Buyer
Call: 01922 495066
or 07971 783206 ✔

READERS ARE ADVISED to carefully consider all of their options before agreeing to the sale of any of their items.

WANTED
VINTAGE TOYS
Star Wars, He-Man, Ghost Busters, Ninja Turtles, Corgi or Dinky.
All vintage toys considered.
Good prices paid.
Unleash the cash in your loft.
Call Tony on 07812 903338.

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READERS ARE REMINDED that they may require professional advice before entering into obligations.

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CLIENT COMPUTERS
Certified technician & Microsoft partner.
Repair & maintain laptops and PCs. In West Midlands.
Virus removal, broken screens, wifi.
Windows problems etc.
Home visits or bring to me.
Long established.
Laptops available.
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specialists at your service

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AERIALS FITTED FROM £79.99
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Over 35 years exp
All aspects of building work
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SPR CARPENTRY Six internal pre-primed doors fully fitted from £370. 0121 5322672 or 07958 552625.

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A CARPETS & VINYLS supplied or just fitted, quality samples brought to your home, no job too small, free quotes call Mark 01543 820598 / 07941 619694.

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christmastreesatapl.co.uk Check the above website or call 0121 505 355 for quality real trees, blocked & netted. Location WS10 9HA

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JUST DAMP PROOFING
All Areas Covered
Sovereign approved damp proofer
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Backed Guarantee available
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Michael- Portway Fencing

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Michael- Portway Fencing

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SPECIAL OFFER
10 Bays of quality fencing, concrete posts, gravel boards **£695**
Heavy duty panels supplied & fitted.
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DELIVERY AVAILABLE
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Tree's, shrubs and hedges planted.
Fencing supplied and erected.
Stumps treated or removed.
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Landywood Tree & Landscaping Services
All garden work, tree felling/lopping, pruning, hedges trimmed, turf, patios, fencing, block-paving etc.
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Same Day Service
Free Quotes
DISCOUNTS FOR OAPs
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READERS ARE ADVISED
To check that anyone carrying out any Gas work is Gas Safe Registered.
It is an offence under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 to carry out gas work in the UK without being on the Gas Safe Register.

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ALL METAL GATES,RAILINGS, etc. Free quotes, also repairs & fitting. 07903 500642 24 hours.

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HANDY MAN - Most trades, plumbing, heating, gardening & decorating. Gutter clean no ladders, free quotes call 07497 826697.

YOUR LOCAL HANDYMAN
FREE QUOTES
All work guaranteed, Most trades covered, References available on request. No job too big or too small!
CALL MIKE: 07947 621047
0121 6010479

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A1 HOUSE CLEARANCE
Full, part and single rubbish removed.
Garage and sheds cleared.
Leather 3 piece suites and leather chesterfields wanted.
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Garage and sheds cleared.
Leather 3 piece suites and leather chesterfields wanted.
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A ABSOLUTE BEST cash price paid for house clearances and bereavements. Also removals undertaken. **07852 172641 / 07710 360327**

ALL ROUND CLEARANCE
Professional family run business
House clearances full or part, also garages, sheds etc.
Telephone Kev
07794 912844

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THE KITCHEN FITTER Over 20 years experience. Call 07881 654757 or 01543 373233.

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LOCKRITE local father and daughter locksmiths, lock-outs, broken locks, UPVC specialist, 24hr service. 07585 099385.

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C&D DECORATING City & Guilds / Wallpapering. Tiling and Flooring. Free quotes, call 07973 286288.

LADY DECORATOR Full house or one wall to customer requirements. Free quotes call: 07522 643706.

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For the very best in plastering and rendering, full rooms inc materials from 110. Halls, stairs and landings from 200
30 years experience.
Free quotes. All work guaranteed
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STEVES PLASTERING SERVICE Clean and Reliable, All Work Undertaken, All Areas. Call 0121 567 5919 / 07977 262943.

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ALL PLUMBING WORK UNDERTAKEN
No job too large. All work guaranteed.
Call Will for a free quote
07521 411108

PLUMBING WORK UNDERTAKEN No job too small or large. Call Will for a free quote on: 07521 411108.

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12 years experience.
SINGLE ITEMS TO FULL LOADS.
LOCAL OR DISTANCE. FULLY INSURED.
Free Quotes - Call Ric on:
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KT REMOVALS 12 yrs exp. Single items to full load removals. Local / distance. Call Ric: 07771 727119.

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MG ROOFING Flat roofs, tiling, roof repairs, fascias and gutters. Call 01902 238989 / 07580 465449.

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Mini, midi skips
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Bring your own waste cheaper than skips. General, Green, Wood waste any size vehicle. Phone for prices:
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MR B'S UPHOLSTERY
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t.v. / home entertainment

Service

AERIAL AND TV SPECIALIST Any TV Repairs. Digital aerials, sky, CCTV cameras. TV wall mounts and TV set ups. 07850 330251.

4 Pets & Animals

Equestrian Corner

ALL READERS are advised to check if Horses, Donkeys or Ponies have the required Passport information.

Guns & Dogs

NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS
Advertisers must ensure that they meet all necessary legal requirements for owning and using guns.

STOPPS PAGE & SONS ROOFING
We specialise in:
New Roofing, Re Roofing, Leak Repairs, Emergency Repairs, Lead Work, Tiling and Slating.
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Domestic Roofing Division
■ All aspects of roofing work undertaken
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NFRC

BUY LOCAL, SELL LOCAL

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Pets Corner

NOTICE TO READERS
Please be aware that when purchasing a puppy there are some simple guidelines you can follow to ensure that you are not purchasing from a Puppy Farmer:
1. Try to ensure you visit the puppy whilst it is still with it's Mother.
2. Do not arrange to collect a puppy from any other location than that of the breeder.
3. Ensure that you are given any KC documentation, if pedigree.
Whilst Midland News Association publications take great care to avoid publication of advertisements from Puppy Farmers we cannot accept any liability should readers purchase from this kind of establishment.

BABY BUDGIE, with cage and all accessories £40. 07716 847443.

5 Business & Farming

Business Opportunities

READERS are recommended to take appropriate professional advice before entering into any obligations.

business directory

Commercial Premises

UNITS AND OFFICE SPACE to let in Oldbury, West Bromwich and Walsall. Easy Terms. Ashmore Properties 0121 520 5318.

6 Property

Accommodation To Let

NOTICE TO READERS
Readers are advised to seek independent legal advice before entering into any financial commitments/contracts.

NOTICE TO READERS
It is an offence under the Accommodation Agencies Act 1953, for an Agency to charge a fee simply for the registration of your requirements and/or supplying particulars of premises to let.

J9 Accommodation
NO DEPOSIT
★MOVE IN TODAY★
Studios
from **£90pw***
Rooms
from **£65pw***
**Includes Most Bills*
CHECK WEBSITE FOR LIVE LIST
Midland Landlord Accreditation Scheme
01902 213121
J9accommodation.com

ONE BED apartment, GF, 5 mins walk from Burntwood Town Centre, large sitting room, with double bedroom, 2 car parking spaces, £400pcm. 07956 347993.

STUDIO FLAT All amenities, low deposit, vacant. near Sandwell Hospital. 07828 504083.

Overseas Property

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THE EASY WAY TO SELL YOUR HOUSE
We Buy Houses For Cash
Free Valuation? Yes! No Fees? Yes! Any Location? Yes!
Fast Sale? Yes! Any House? Yes! Any Condition? Yes!
Get your FREE, instant cash offer today!
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• Any Price • Any Condition • Any Area
Call Paula 01384 467643
We are not connected to any other advertiser
www.webuyhouseswestmidlands.co.uk

7 Jobs

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GENTLEMANS HAIRDRESSER (Barber) required
Also
SCHOOL LEAVER for Apprenticeship,
Quinton area
0121 422 4104

Full Time General

ASSISTANT / TRAINEE Land Surveyor All training provided, driving Licence preferred. Apply in writing manda@mandasurveys.co.uk

Express & Star

A QUICK AND EASY WAY TO FILL YOUR VACANCY.

Call the Recruitment Experts on 01902 319227 to find out more.

Part of Express & Star Ltd MNA Media

Star Employment services

Our client based in Snowhill, Birmingham is currently looking for a number of vacancies for their solicitor firm.

Corporate Senior Associate/Director - Circa £60,000

Commercial Property Solicitor - Circa £32,000

Construction Senior Associate - £45,000 - £55,000

Private Client Senior Associate - £45,000 - £55,000

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*salary dependant on experience

For further information please contact Star Employment Services on 01902 319 333 or send CV to jobs@staremploymentservices.co.uk

Do you fancy a career change, have you ever thought of a career in care?

Inshore Support

If so we may be able to help.

We provide care and support for people with complex and challenging behaviour.

Our services based in the West Midlands area have the following vacancies at our residential and supported living homes based in Wolverhampton, Stourbridge, Halesowen, Dudley and Coventry areas.

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Applicants should have 2 years minimum experience & NVQ Level 3 or be working towards this qualification. Salary £9.00 per hour.

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We currently have vacancies for daytime support workers, no experience is necessary as training will be provided. Salary £8.00 per hour.

Call our office 01384 421460 for an application pack or email stephaniesmith@inshoresupportltd.co.uk

8 Motoring

Cars Over £1500

HAVE YOU CHECKED your advertisement today? We would respectfully remind advertisers that it is their responsibility to inform the publishers of any mistakes or inaccuracies on the first day of publication.

NISSAN QASHQAI ACENTA
2011, 1.5 cDi, 5 door, hatchback, 81k, 11 months MoT, red, abs, electric windows / mirrors, fsh. Towbar, good runner, lovey motor.
£5,500 ono.
07864 964724.

Cars Under £1500

IDEAL FIRST CAR
FORD FOCUS
2001, 5-dr hatch Y reg, good runner, clean condition, MoT till May. Aquamarine green. Very reliable.
£250.
01922 632117. 07875 742641.

PEUGEOT 307 HDI
Diesel, 2001, 156,400 miles, metallic blue, alloys, pas, front e/w, radio CD, MoT May 2018. Reconditioned gearbox.
Any trial.
£495 ono.
Phone Tom after 5pm.
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BARGAIN
RENAULT CLIO GRANDE 1.2
W Reg., 67,000 miles, MoT to May 2018, full history, second lady owner, used daily.
£250 o.n.o.
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Cars Under £1500

BARGAIN
SAAB 2.0 LITRE DIESEL ESTATE
05 plate.
MoT'd September 2018.
No rust or dents.
Nice condition.
Good on Diesel. 6 speed.
Drives very good.
As new tyres.
New car forces sale.
£925 ono.
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VAUXHALL ASTRA
R reg, prestine condition, alloys, 1.6 petrol, 12 months MoT, 49,000 miles,
£600.
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VAUXHALL CORSA ACTIVE
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9 Local Information

Public Notices

MAVIS DOREEN COLEY
(otherwise Maiden name: Hill)
(Deceased)

Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 any persons having a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the above named, late of 63 Harvest Road, Rowley Regis B65 8EL, who died on 30/08/2017, are required to send written particulars thereof to the undersigned on or before 31/01/2018, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to the claims and interests of which they have had notice.

Glenn Coley, 10 Walton Court, Halesowen B63 4JH.

LEGAL / PUBLIC NOTICES
For convenience youmay fax any advertising requirements to
Marie Hogg on 01902 713146 or email marie.hogg@expressandstar.co.uk
(remember to include a name/contact number for confirmation of receipt)

10 Personals

Personal

ATRACTIVE LADY 51
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ATTRACTIVE lonely Female seeking broadminded males within a 20 mile radius. 01902 489 181.

FRIENDLESS MALE
Seeking a special friend, any nationality, for days out , cinema, and companionship.
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SMART YOUNG AT HEART GENT
With good sense of humour, enjoys walks, cinema, theatre etc, would love to meet a slim, sincere, well dressed lady 55 - 60 to share happy days.
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SANDWELL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
Regeneration and Planning
Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015

I hereby give notice that Sandwell Council has received the following applications under the planning acts which it is required to give public notice for the reason given at the beginning of each group of applications.

This is a major application.

DC/17/61140	Mr Anupe Singh	Site Of Former Great Bridge Neighbourhood Office Sheepwash Lane Tipton	Proposed 14 No. dwellings.

Members of the public may inspect copies of these applications at Council House, Freeth Street, Oldbury, West Midlands, B69 3DE (between 8.45a.m. and 5.30p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, 9.00a.m. and 5.30p.m. Wednesday and 8.45a.m. to 5p.m. Friday) or via the Council's Public Access website (www.sandwell.gov.uk).

Anyone who wishes to make representations about these applications can do so via the website, or should write to the Council at the above address within 21 days (and 21 days for Listed Building or Conservation Area consent) of the date of this advertisement quoting the application reference number.

MR JAN BRITTON, Chief Executive

SANDWELL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Borough Council of Sandwell (Lambert End, West Bromwich) (Temporary Road Closure) Order 2017, has made an Order to temporarily prohibit any vehicles from proceeding along Lambert End, West Bromwich. The maximum duration is 18 months, but the work is expected to be completed by 12/12/17, effective from 08/12/17. Traffic will be diverted via Wood Lane, Wheatley Street, Harwood Street and vice-versa. Purpose – sewer inspection by Enviromotel Ltd for Severn Trent Water.

The Borough Council of Sandwell (Mornington Road, Smethwick) (Prohibition of Turning) Order 2017, has made an Order to temporarily prohibit any vehicles from turning right out of Mornington Road into Downing Street. The maximum duration is 18 months, but the work is expected to be completed by 19/12/17, effective from 04/12/17. Traffic will be diverted via Cornwall Road, Rabone Lane and Bridge Street North. Purpose – gas main improvement works by Balfour Beatty for Cadent Gas Ltd.

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SAVE £20

Capture all of life's adventures in brilliant high definition with this 1080P HD action camera from Zennox. Whether you're battling the elements on a bike, skiing down a mountain in the snow or embarking on a scenic road trip, this versatile and lightweight camera will record it all for you to enjoy later. The camera comes with everything you will need to get the footage you want, including waterproof housing for the camera, handlebar/pole mount, a clip, four different mounts, straps, adhesive pads and a USB cable. Using the waterproof housing, this camera can be submerged up to 30 metres, perfect for water sports such as surfing, diving, snorkelling, coasteering and swimming.

The built-in Wi-Fi capability allows the camera to be remotely controlled from your smart phone, via the 'GoPlus' application. Features of this app include full camera control, live preview, photo playback and content sharing. All footage recorded can also be stored on a micro SD card from 4GB up to 32GB (not included), allowing you to enjoy recording adventures in the future. This high specification camera is packed full of great features, including a 2-inch HD LCD screen, a 140-degree wide angle lens, video recording in 1080 pixels 30 fps, multi-language settings and a 1.5-hour battery life. Don't worry if your battery runs out during filming, as this camera will also automatically save the recording before switching off.

G2052 1080P HD Wi-Fi Action Camera

zennox

Men's 10-section Watch Box

SAVE £20

Only £39.99 Was £59.99

HALL & SLOANE

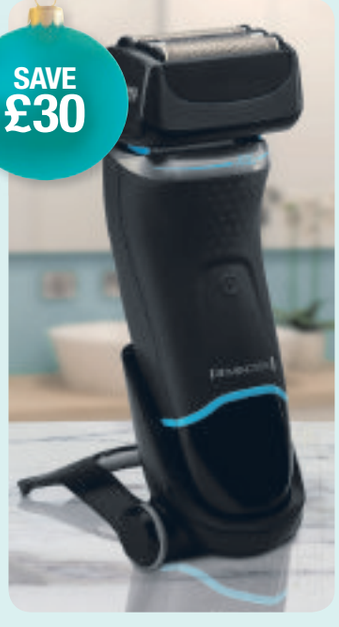
Keep watches clean and tidy with this 10-section leather effect watch box. It has a metal closing clasp and is lined with a soft faux suede fabric. It has 10 compartments and comes complete with 10 watch pillows. H8.5 x W33.5 x D25cm. Watches not included. L25 x W33.5 x H8.5cm.

G1020 10-section Watch Box

Remington Capture

Only £69.99 Was £99.99

SAVE £30



The Remington Capture Cut is a foil shaver that features superb shaving technology to give a close and comfortable shave. The shaver is designed to capture and cut longer, low-lying hairs which other shavers would normally miss. The shaver features AccuCut Blades and LiftLogic foils, to provide the best ever shave technology. It also has PivotAssist Plus and ConstantContour technology for ease of use and has a pop-up trimmer to help with precision finishing. It is 100 per cent waterproof for use in and out of the shower, giving you ultimate choice for a suitable shave.

Powered by a lithium-ion battery which gives you up to 50 minutes usage time on a full three-hour charge, it features three indicator lights for low, full or charging battery levels. There is even a handy five-minute quick charge feature for when you're in a hurry. The shaver is cordless and comes with a charge stand of universal voltage, carry pouch and has a manufacturers two-year guarantee.

G2285 Remington Capture Cut Foil Shaver

REMINGTON

2 YEAR WARRANTY

Fisherman's Jumper

Only £45 Was £75

SAVE £30

Chunky enough to fend off the cold, but breathable so you don't end up sweltering when you go for a stroll, these traditionally styled, 100 per cent wool fisherman's jumpers are just the thing for when the mercury drops. Available in five seasonal colours. Hand-wash only. Available in sizes (to fit chest): S (36-38"), M (39-42"), L (43-44"). XL (45-48"), XXL (49-50").

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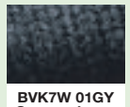
BVK7W 01SG Sage



BVK7W 01GY Grey-melange

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*Calls cost 13p per minute plus your phone company's access charge.

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Five-star crash rating for Volvo XC60

The new Volvo XC60 SUV has scored the best overall safety rating of any car in 2017 after achieving the full five stars in Euro NCAP crash tests.

The car safety organisation has released its latest ratings, with all eight newly tested cars achieving five stars out of five. However, the XC60 was exceptional when individual section ratings were taken into account.

It scored a near-perfect 98 per cent for adult occupant protection and 95 per cent for its standard-fit safety systems.

It also scored 87 per cent for child occupant protection and 76 per cent for pedestrians.

All-round

Euro NCAP says this makes it the best all-round performer of the year and puts the XC60 on a par with its larger sibling, the Volvo XC90.

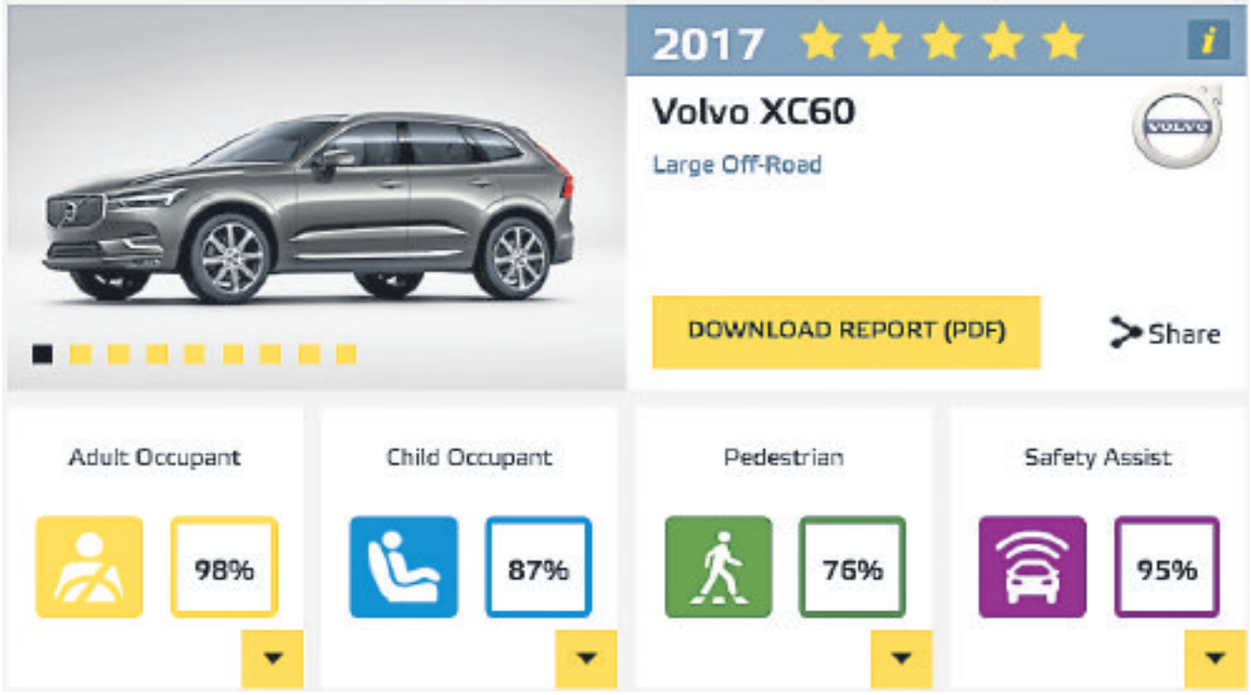
Matthew Avery, director of research at Thatcham Research, which is a member of the Euro NCAP organisation, said: "It's exceedingly rare for a vehicle to score so favourably across the board. The adult occupant protection result for the Volvo XC60 is one of the best on record. But it's in active safety that Volvo is really maintaining its lead."

He said that some of the Volvo's safety kit was so advanced it was not yet part of the testing procedure.

Of the other cars to be tested recently, four new VW Group products got top marks in the form of the VW T-Roc, VW Polo, Skoda Karoq and Seat Arona.

Meanwhile the Citroen C3 Aircross, Mitsubishi Eclipse Cross and Vauxhall Crossland X also got five stars.

Michiel van Ratingen, secretary general of Euro NCAP, said he was pleased to see top-end cars like the Volvo XC60 pushing safety boundaries, but added: "It is the high-selling mass-market vehicles that will really influence road safety in the future and manufacturers like Nissan, Ford, Seat and VW are to be congratulated for democratising safety by making high-tech safety assistance available on their superminis."



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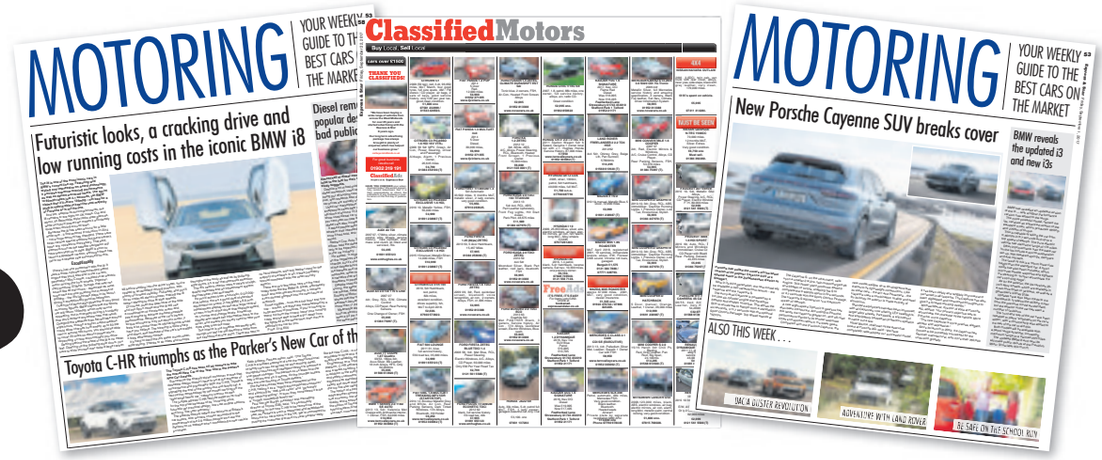

NEW CAR OFFERS

USED CAR DEALS

PRIVATE AND FROM THE TRADE!

NEW CAR REVIEWS & ROAD TESTS

MOTORING

Express & Star

How to improve a car's performance by 70%

The effectiveness consultancy Benchmarketing recently analysed what happens when companies include press advertising in their media mix.

They looked at more than 500 econometric models, covering a five-year period and, as the table here shows, they found that adding newspapers dramatically increases the effectiveness of other media.

In the automotive sector they reviewed companies that ranged from the big spending German goliaths of the industry to medium sized independent carmakers.

And they discovered that by adding newspaper advertising to their campaigns, they cranked up their effectiveness by over 70%.

Increased effectiveness using newspapers

Retail	Automotive	Finance
2.8x	**1.7x**	**5.7x**

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LOCAL MEDIA WORKS

Geoff Hurst scoring the final goal – and his hat-trick – for England in the World Cup final of 1966

Morgan Gibbs-White played a key role in England's under-17s' World Cup triumph

Legendary Wolves player Ron Flowers

How Ron also played his part for World Cup heroes

Getting stuck in – Wolves legend Ron Flowers, right, in action

SPORTING FEATURE

By Joseph Masi

WOLVES youngster Morgan Gibbs-White played a key role as England's under-17s spectacularly triumphed at last month's World Cup.

The winger netted against the USA in the quarter-finals before scoring again in the final as the Three Lions came from behind to hammer Spain 5-2.

It's a result that has led to England fans dreaming the young starlets may one day replicate their form for the senior side. And it seems whenever the national side does triumph on the world stage, a Wolves player is at the heart of it.

Of course, England's one and only major tournament win came at the World Cup on home turf in 1966. And while Wolves legend Ron Flowers didn't kick a ball in anger at that tournament, he certainly played his part.

Spotted as a teenager by scouts while playing for Doncaster Rovers, Flowers joined Wolves in 1952.

Convince

Initially boss Stan Cullis had to convince Ron's father Jack to allow him to sign – with his dad preferring his son stayed in Yorkshire to continue an apprenticeship with train firm LNER Locomotive.

But Ron and Stan got their way and for the next 15 years Flowers became integral to a Wolves side that enjoyed huge success.

Playing at either wing-half or centre-half, he formed an outstanding partnership with Peter Broadbent. And that formed the bedrock of the Wolves teams that won the League Championship in 1954, 1958 and 1959, as well as the FA Cup in 1960.

In total, Flowers made 512 appearances for the club between 1952 and 1967, scoring 37 goals – putting him sixth in the club's all-time list of appearance makers.

His form in gold and black also allowed him to shine on the international stage.

In 49 appearances for England, Flowers scored 10 goals and played in the 1962 World Cup.

But in an exclusive interview he said there was a particular reason why he was included in Sir Alf Ramsey's triumphant squad in 1966.

As the oldest member of the group, Flowers revealed he was there to set an example. "I was there to do a job," he said.

> ***"As far as I had been concerned, my England career was finished. I hadn't been expecting the call."***

"As far as I had been concerned, my England career was finished. I hadn't been expecting the call."

Flowers also came a whisker away from playing in the biggest game in English football.

Before the final in 1966, Jack Charlton had told Ramsey he was struggling with a cold. And that prompted the boss to put Flowers on stand-by.

"The message was, be ready," explains Flowers.

"It was not, as you might expect however, the cause of any nerves, or indeed a restless night. It didn't make any difference to my thinking.

Private

"I knew whatever he might have come down with, he would play.

"Do you really think Jack Charlton was going to miss out on the World Cup final because of a cold?

"It would have needed to have been one heck of a cold."

In those days, players who didn't play in the final didn't receive a winner's medal. But Flowers' role in England's greatest achievement would eventually be acknowledged.

In 2009, Prime Minister Gordon Brown invited all 10 players who missed out to Downing Street for a private reception.

They were then finally presented with a medal which they got to parade on the pitch at Wembley at half-time during England's clash with Andorra.

Book on boss Taylor set for publication

THE biography of the former Villa, Wolves and England boss Graham Taylor was being released this week. Sir Elton John has provided the foreword for the book, Graham Taylor: In His Own Words, which was going on sale today (Thursday). Published by Peloton, it is available as a hardback, priced £19.99

Taylor, who passed away aged 72 in January, had been working on the publication since 2014 with journalist Lionel Birnie. It was completed with support from Taylor's family. His widow Rita said it had been a 'very important' project for him.

The book covers Taylor's playing days at Grimsby Town and Lincoln City and into his managerial career, guiding Watford from the Fourth Division to the top flight, on to Villa and then as national boss. It goes on to cover England's failure to qualify for the 1994 World Cup, and the impact of subsequent press coverage on his family – before restoring his reputation as club boss with spells at Wolves and back at Watford.

Mayor leads pitch as 3G facilities unveiled

THE Mayor Sandwell was officially unveiling two 3G artificial grass pitches at the George Salter Academy this week. Councillor Ahmadul Haque was launching the facilities yesterday (Wednesday).

The project was made possible thanks to a £462,000 grant from the Premier League & The FA Facilities Fund, which is delivered by the Football Foundation. The pitches will replace two existing sand-dressed AGPs, which were in poor condition due to age, with new floodlit all-weather playing surfaces.

They will not only benefit the Academy's students, but also partner clubs Tantany Lions FC and Greets Green Albion FC who train and play there and are expected to introduce 14 new teams collectively.

Founded in 2000, the Football Foundation is the largest sports charity in the UK funded by the Premier League, The FA and Government, via Sport England. It develops new and refurbished facilities in order to improve the quality and experience of playing sport at grassroots level.

Captain at double in England success

SKIPPER Steph Houghton led by example as England Women roared to a 4-0 World Cup qualifying success over Bosnia & Herzegovina at Walsall's Banks's Stadium last Friday night.

Houghton netted twice in front of a sell-out crowd, with Manchester City team-mate Nikita Parris and Chelsea's Fran Kirby also on target.

A first victory for caretaker boss Mo Marley kept England hot on the heels of Group One leaders Wales ahead of Tuesday's game against Kazakhstan at Colchester.

Houghton headed England into a 19th-minute lead following Alex Greenwood's corner. England's Barcelona striker Toni Duggan was denied by the woodwork and Danielle Carter squandered a golden chance.

Less than a minute into the second period, Duggan set up Parris to make it 2-0. Houghton fired her second direct from a 54th-minute free-kick and after Aida Hadzic fouled Carter in the area, Kirby completed the scoring from the penalty spot.

Sport

Wolves legend Flowers' key part in World Cup win

Page 39

My time has come, insists boxer Clarke

HALESOWEN'S super middleweight sensation Lennox Clarke believes his time has finally come.

The 26-year-old is ready to make up for lost time when he challenges Jahmaine Smyle for the vacant International Boxing Organisation Continental Super Middleweight Title on Saturday.

The bout will take place in Smyle's hometown at the Leicester Arena as part of Cyclone Promotions' bumper All Or Nothing Show, topped with Sweden's undefeated European super lightweight champion Anthony Digit defending his belt against Wiltshire's former English champion Joe Hughes.

After seeing his own English Title shot stall, Clarke is determined to steal the show, which will be aired live on Channel 5.

"This is my time now," exclaimed Clarke. "I've been waiting for a while for a title shot and finally it's here.

"Jahmaine is strong and tough and aggressive. I'm ready to put in a performance and bring that belt home."

'All Or Nothing' also features Commonwealth cruiserweight king Luke Watkins. 'The Duke' makes his first defence against Southport's former British title challenger Mike Stafford, while unbeaten Wolverhampton bantamweight Kyle Williams will fight for the fourth time this year.

Lichfield super flyweight Brad Foster, Josh Quailey, and Chantelle Cameron complete the card. Tickets can be purchased from http://www.cyclonepromotions.com

Ace rider 'Rocket' Ronnie steps in for Christmas cracker

WOLVERHAMPTON icon Ronnie Correy will join the BT Sport team at a special stage show in the city tonight (Thursday).

Correy steps in for unwell team boss Peter Adams at the 'Tatum and Pearson Christmas Cracker' at the Cleveland Arms Sports Pub, Stow Heath Lane. It starts at 8pm.

The charismatic American is one of the club's all-time greats and remains a firm favourite with supporters.

BT Sport commentators Kelvin Tatum and Nigel Pearson are also joined by presenter Natalie Quirk, Cradley hero Ashley Morris and Birmingham star Danyon Hume.

Tatum said: "I'm really looking forward to the show and I'm particularly pleased to welcome our guests, which now include 'Rocket' Ronnie.

"He was a terrific rider, I had my fair share of battles with him down the years and he was prolific around Monmore Green. It's a great line-up and we are going to have some fun."

Tickets are £10 on 01902 451021. Any remaining will be available on the door.

Brummies win race for teenage ace

Teenage prospect Leon Flint

BIRMINGHAM Brummies have made a club record signing, snapping up teenage prospect Leon Flint.

Flint is still only 14 but becomes eligible for National League action when he turns 15 in February.

As the 250cc National Champion he was coveted by most other clubs – but Brummies won the race for his signature. An excited Flint said: "I'm so pleased with what I've done on the 250s but the 500s don't faze me at all. In fact, the faster I'm going, the better I feel and whenever I have ridden the 500s I felt even more confident.

"After having such an amazing 2017 season, moving up into the National League is another huge step in the right direction for me and 2018 is going to be another massive year.

"I'm just hoping I can come in, settle down pretty quickly and be a key rider for such a big club like Birmingham."

Owner David Mason believes adding Flint alongside the already confirmed Danyon Hume is a major coup for the Brummies.

He said: "I think this is brilliant for Birmingham Speedway. He is undoubtedly one of the stars of the future who has already achieved a lot at such a young age.

"Signing Danyon on his average and getting a three-pointer in like Leon is an absolute dream start to our plans for next season."

HERE MEGGO AGAIN, GARY

GARY MEGSON admits the management bug is back after guiding a resurgent Albion to a 1-1 draw against Tottenham at Wembley.

The 58-year-old appeared to be out of running to replace Tony Pulis permanently, but was due to be in charge for Tuesday night's visit of Newcastle.

"I have never said I want the West Brom job," confirmed Megson, who twice led the Baggies to the Premier League when in charge between 2000 and 2004. "What I have said is that this – not just these last few days but going back into football – has whetted my appetite for it."

"I enjoyed being on that touchline, I think I'm good at it. But the 90 minutes has made no difference for myself, it's up to the board to decide what they're doing. Who knows how long an interim period is?"

Change

Megson also revealed how he spoke to Pulis in the build-up to Saturday's draw – but did not ask for advice.

"I've spoken to Tony a lot of times," he said on Saturday. "I spoke to him today at 2.20pm just to see what he was doing, but in terms of input, if that was the case, Tony could have just stayed and kept the job and carried on!"

"I've been with him now for the last four months, and we're not suddenly going to change everything, we can't, we haven't got a big enough squad, we didn't have enough time, and it would be a little bit disrespectful to say: 'OK, whatever we've been doing for the last dozen games, we're going to do something different.'

"There were maybe one or two tweaks, but nothing majorly different. Today we had a lot of good performances from players."

For 70 minutes, Albion's most fondly remembered manager of recent years was masterminding a typical Megson-era 1-0 against one of the country's greatest teams and the Premier League's most celebrated young managers. The fact he was visibly enjoying himself on the touchline, even relishing the simple act of berating referee Mike Jones, made it all the more nostalgic.

Salomon Rondon's strike trickles into the Tottenham net to give the Baggies the lead

Megson has a special rapport with Albion fans and there were chants of 'There's Only One Gary Megson' among the 3,500-strong away support.

On the pitch, confidence has been restored and experienced heads are back to their best.

Jonny Evans and Gareth Barry, two reliable players who have been off the pace recently, were absolutely supreme here. Salomon Rondon had his best game for Albion for nearly 12 months and gave the Baggies the lead early on. Young Sam Field looked at home on the biggest stage.

Albion only had 27 per cent possession on the day and, at times, were forced to battle on the edge of their penalty area with 10 men behind the ball. But they moved the ball through the pitch with far more purpose. They were calm in possession, and enjoyed having the ball on the deck, particularly in the first half.

Spurs were sluggish for the first half an hour, but they ramped up the pressure as the game wore on and the onslaught came, with Harry Kane notching an equaliser.

Pardew's in line for job with Albion

ALAN PARDEW is expected to be unveiled as Albion boss later this week – and was even set to be at The Hawthorns for Tuesday night's home game against former club Newcastle.

The 56-year-old is in pole position to take over from Tony Pulis after holding talks with the board.

Pardew is eager to join the Baggies – who, before Tuesday night had not won in 12 games in all competitions – and described it as 'an attractive job'. But interim boss Gary Megson was taking charge of the team for the clash against The Magpies.

With just two full days in between Saturday's trip to Wembley and the home match with Newcastle, Albion's hierarchy did not wish to unnecessarily disrupt preparation. But it is thought Pardew could be appointed the following day if talks are finalised and his contract is ironed out.

Megson guided the Baggies to a battling 1-1 draw with Spurs on Saturday and has the backing of supporters after taking twice the club up to the Premier League during his four years in charge.

Meanwhile, Megson described Sam Field as one of the best two-footed players he had seen. The 19-year-old started on Saturday ahead of Paris Saint-Germain loanee Grzegorz Krychowiak and Albion have yet to lose a game in which he has appeared. Megson said he had the greatest range of passing at the Albion.

Megson said: "Sam has a range of passing that is probably better than anybody else's at the club at the minute. He's big, he can run, he's one the best two-footed players I've seen, he's got a huge amount going for him."

Tivi go nap to close the gap on leaders

TIVIDALE closed to within a point of Wolverhampton Sporting Community in the West Midlands Premier thanks to a thumping 5-1 win over Bilston Town Community.

Fourth-placed Black Country Rangers also won big by beating Bewdley Town 4-1.

Cradley Town are just one spot further back following a 5-0 win at AFC Bridgnorth. Gornal move up to fifth in division one after a 3-0 win over Tipton Town.

★★★

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